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The Sounds of Home

A Composition Portfolio

The Sounds of Home

A Composition Portfolio

PAUL GABRIEL L. COSME

An Honors Project
Presented to the Department of Music
Macalester College
Saint Paul, Minnesota, USA
Advisor: Dr. Randy Bauer
April 18, 2022

Acknowledgements

In the Philippines, we say that "the broom is sturdy, because its strands are tightly bound." This honors portfolio is only possible because of everyone who helped me throughout this process. First, I am unabatedly grateful to all my instrumentalists for bringing these compositions to life and for graciously giving the time and the effort to learn these difficult pieces with me throughout the academic year. I have learned so much, not only about composition, but about music making through our experiences.

I thank the entire Music Department for offering me not only the knowledge but the utmost support in the making of this portfolio and in my wider pursuit of better musicianship and music making.

I thank Mark Mandarano for helping me find great instrumentalists and for offering guidance for rehearsing, especially for *Commuting in Manila*.

Mark Mazullo took me into the Music Department and is one of the first people to see the composer in me. I am more indebted to him now for helping Ting-Chien Huang, my pianist and close friend, in bringing the *Fantasy of the Consoled* to life.

I am grateful to Mary Ellen Childs for being a part of my committee, and for extending her time and energies to offer me words of advice for this project and beyond.

My deepest appreciation goes to Victoria Malawey for teaching me theory and counterpoint, and most especially for always believing in my skills as a composer and as her theory preceptor.

I cannot thank enough Randy Bauer for being a phenomenal mentor and for guiding me through every step of the way in this journey. He once told me that I am "natural with comp," and for some reason that always stuck with me, and I always go back to it whenever I feel that I am not a good composer.

I could never forget my friends and family who listened to my compositions even if the beeps and bops sometimes (really, often) did not make sense.

And finally, my Mom and Dad who put up with their then ten-year-old son who smashed the piano keys day and night, and now, for understanding and supporting me in my decision to pursue what I love.

Abstract

What does home sound like? I have spent most of my recent life outside my homeland, the Philippines, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, and this question of what home is has become a persistent thought, if not, a necessary inquiry. This composition portfolio attempts to answer that question in three varying pieces. The first, *The Sounds of Home*, is a string quartet in three movements where each one tells a personal story by invoking Filipino folk and indigenous themes. The second, *Commuting in Manila*, is a wind septet that sonically emulates the commuting experience in Manila from the viewpoint of a working-class Filipino. The third, *The Fantasy of the Consoled*, is a solo piano piece that reflects the way I see the process of consoling and being consoled during difficult times through an inventory of my improvisations and mannerisms on the piano. In sum, these pieces together probe the idea of home in three ways: as nation, as landscape, and as self.

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Paul Gabriel L. Cosme

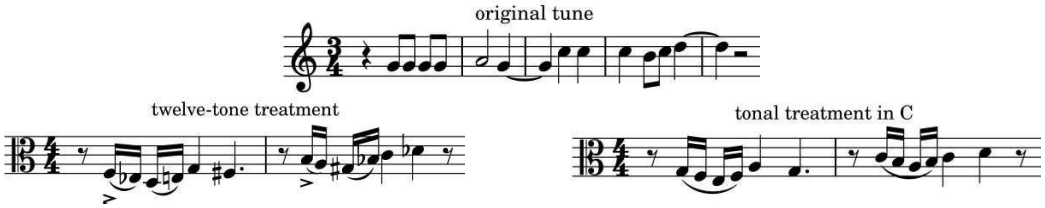
The Sounds of Home

For String Quartet

Program Notes

When the pandemic hit, I was stuck in the United States with no idea of when I could go back home to the Philippines. *The Sounds of Home* is my way of reminiscing the hums and soundscapes of home through a Western tradition dear to me, the string quartet. Each movement tells a personal story and incorporates Filipino folk and indigenous themes.

"A Prayer for Butterflies" is about how the loss of loved ones may cause conflict and grief but resolve in peace. Back home, we believe butterflies to be souls of our loved ones trying to connect with us. The folk tune, *Paru-parong Bukid (Field Butterfly)*, represents these butterflies. After the dissonant fugue that represents a sorrowful prayer, the viola plays this folk tune using all twelve tones per period, marking the arrival of the butterflies. In the end, the fugue returns, albeit shaky, but finds a clear tonal center at C when the butterflies enter again with a peaceful resolution to the restless beginning.



"Grandpa's Lullaby" is straight out of my childhood when my late grandpa would sing a folk song, *Atin cu pung singsing (I once had a ring)*, to lull my younger sister to sleep unsuccessfully. The theme is a close replication of what I hear from my grandpa with a dark accompaniment that foreshadows the literally restless events. Each variation moves away from the theme like my sister who did not want to go to sleep.

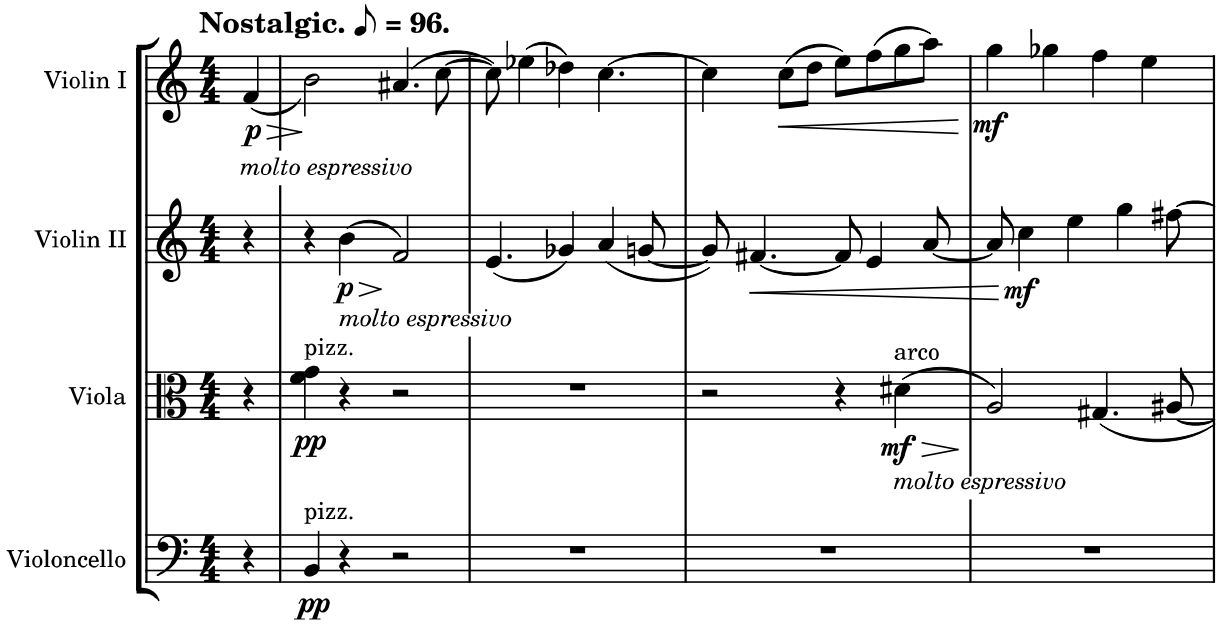
"Bamboo Rhapsody" takes cues from *Singkil*, a dance of the Maranao epic called *Darangen*, specifically about the abduction of Princess Gandingan and her rescue by Prince Bantugan. With a kulintang ensemble, dancers would step over clicking bamboo sticks—a dance I remember too well in high school. *Darangen* is meant to be narrated through chanting, and the rhapsody narrates this legendary epic by mimicking the chants while incorporating the kulintang rhythms, such as the *binalig* which opens the movement, and the pervasive bamboo rhythm, which is retreated in many ways including the explosive exclamation that concludes the entire piece.

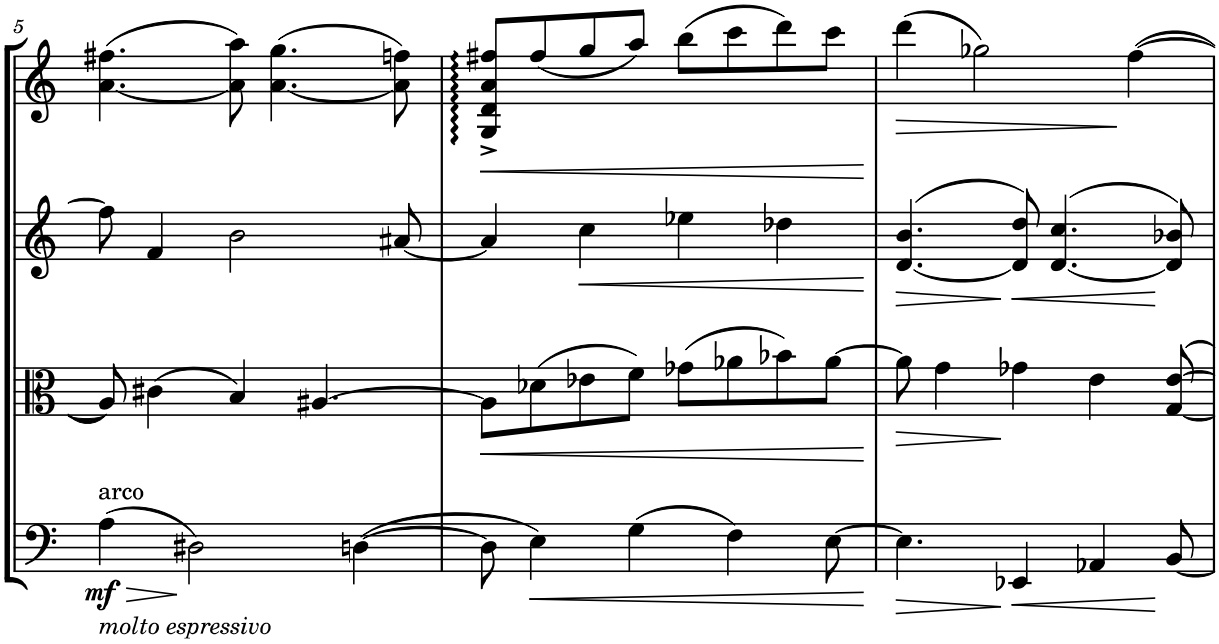
— Paul Gabriel L. Cosme

The Sounds of Home

I. A Prayer for Butterflies

Paul Gabriel L. Cosme





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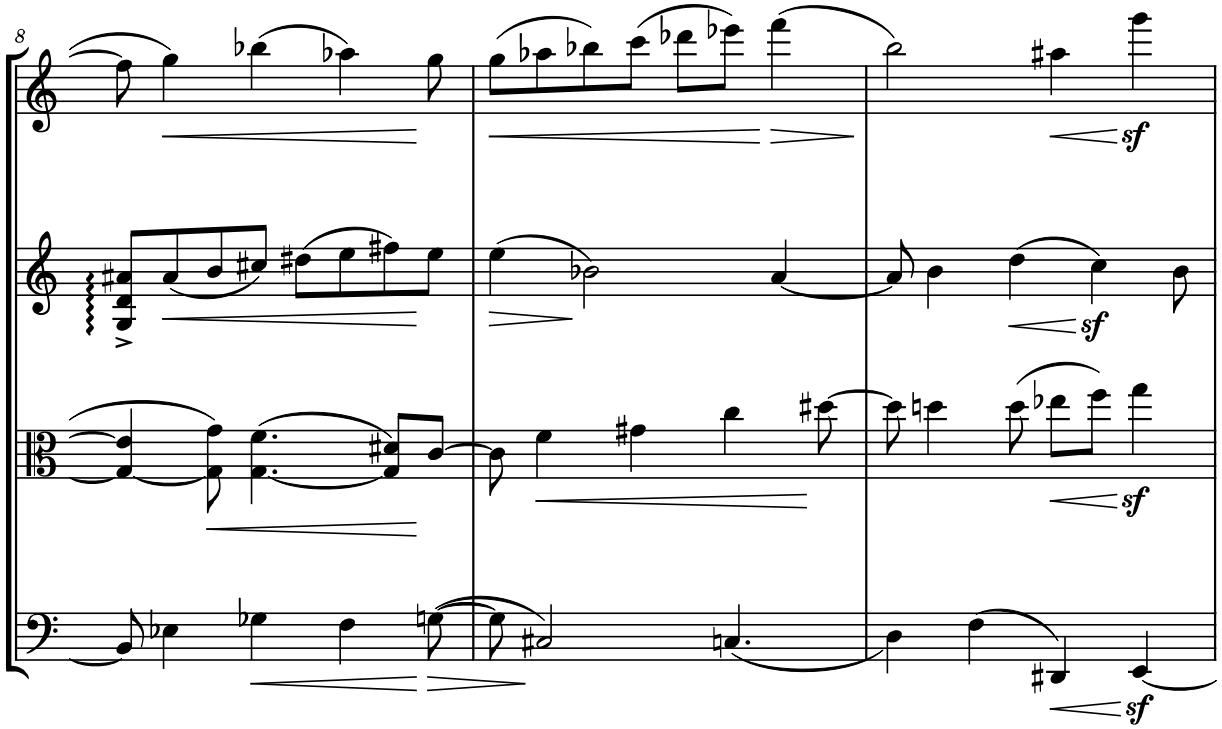
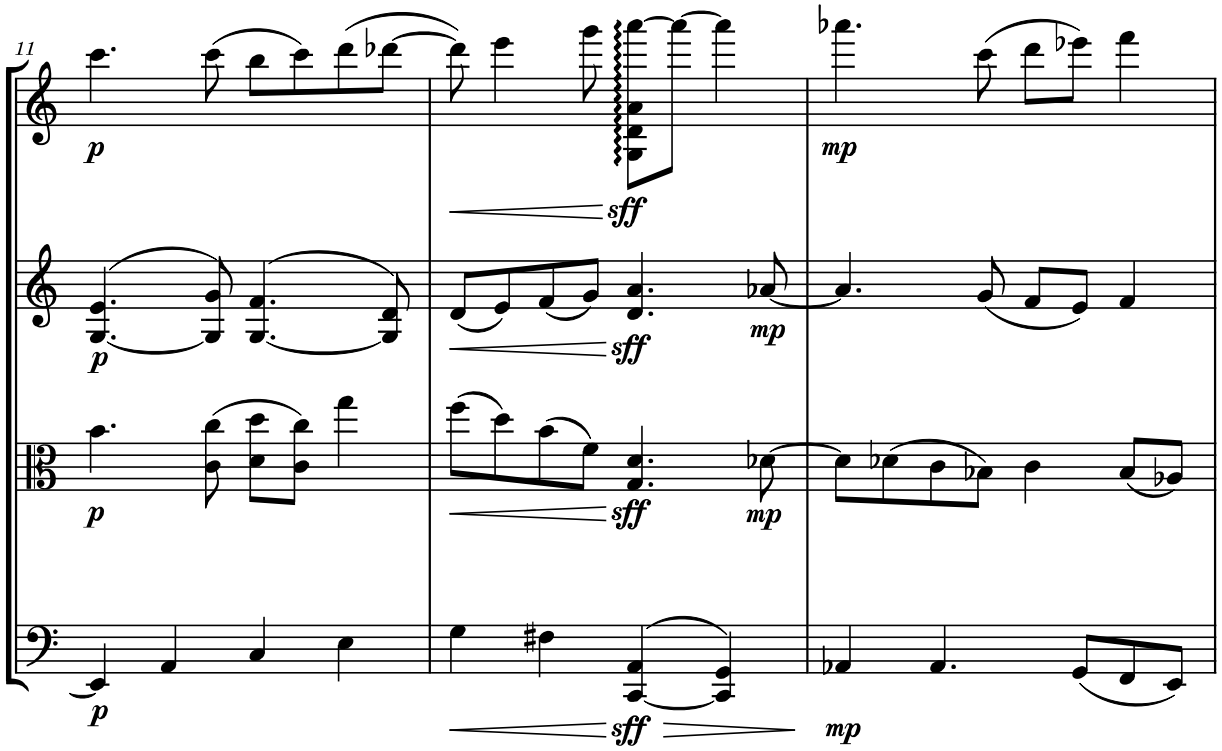
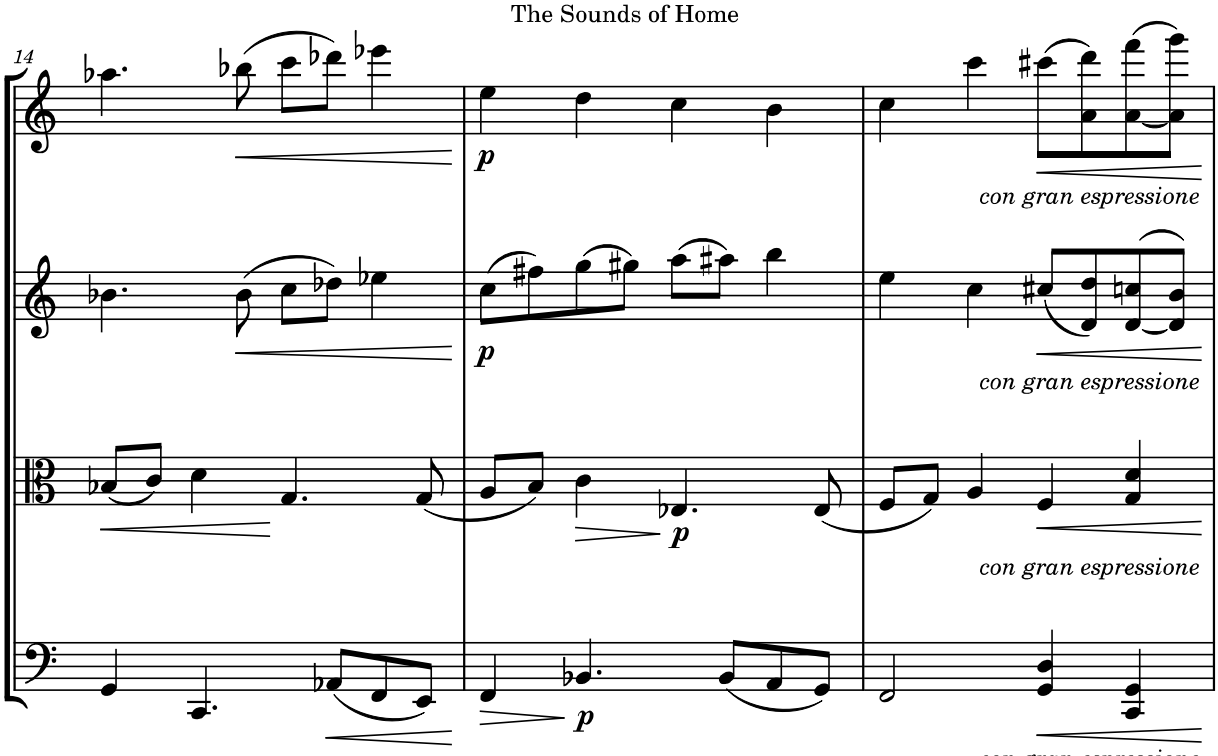
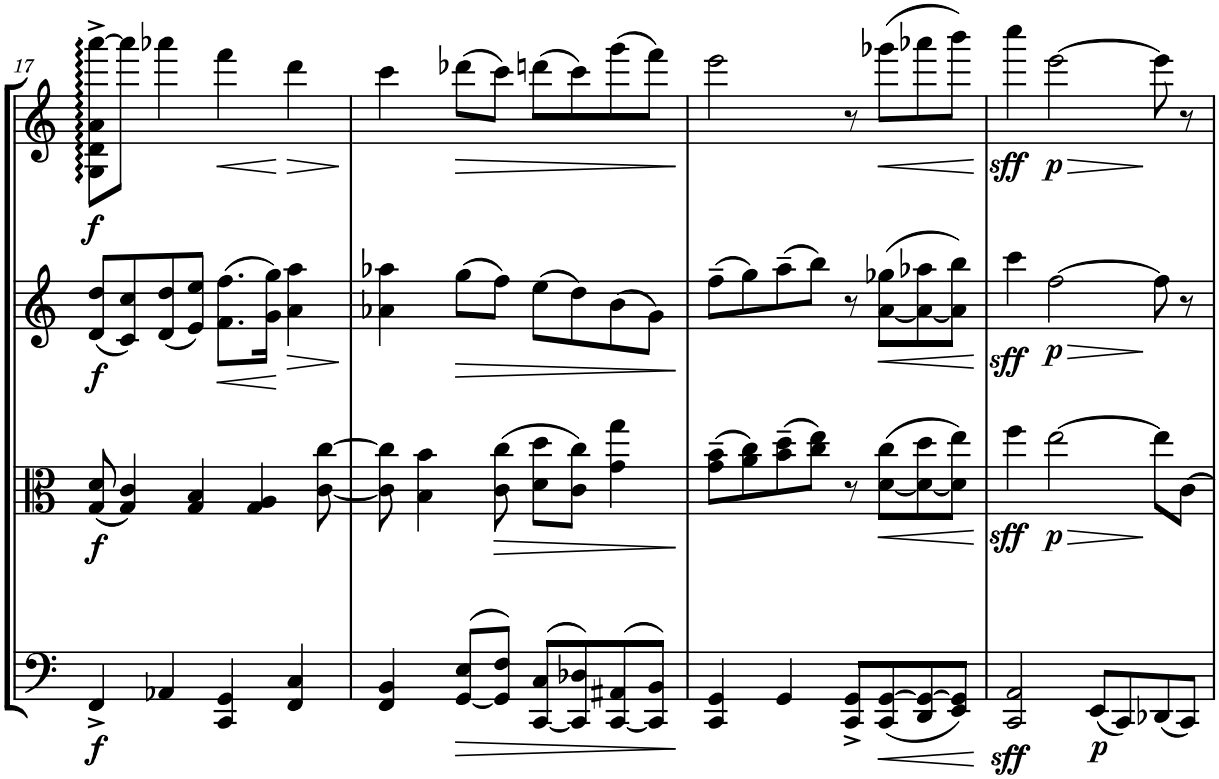
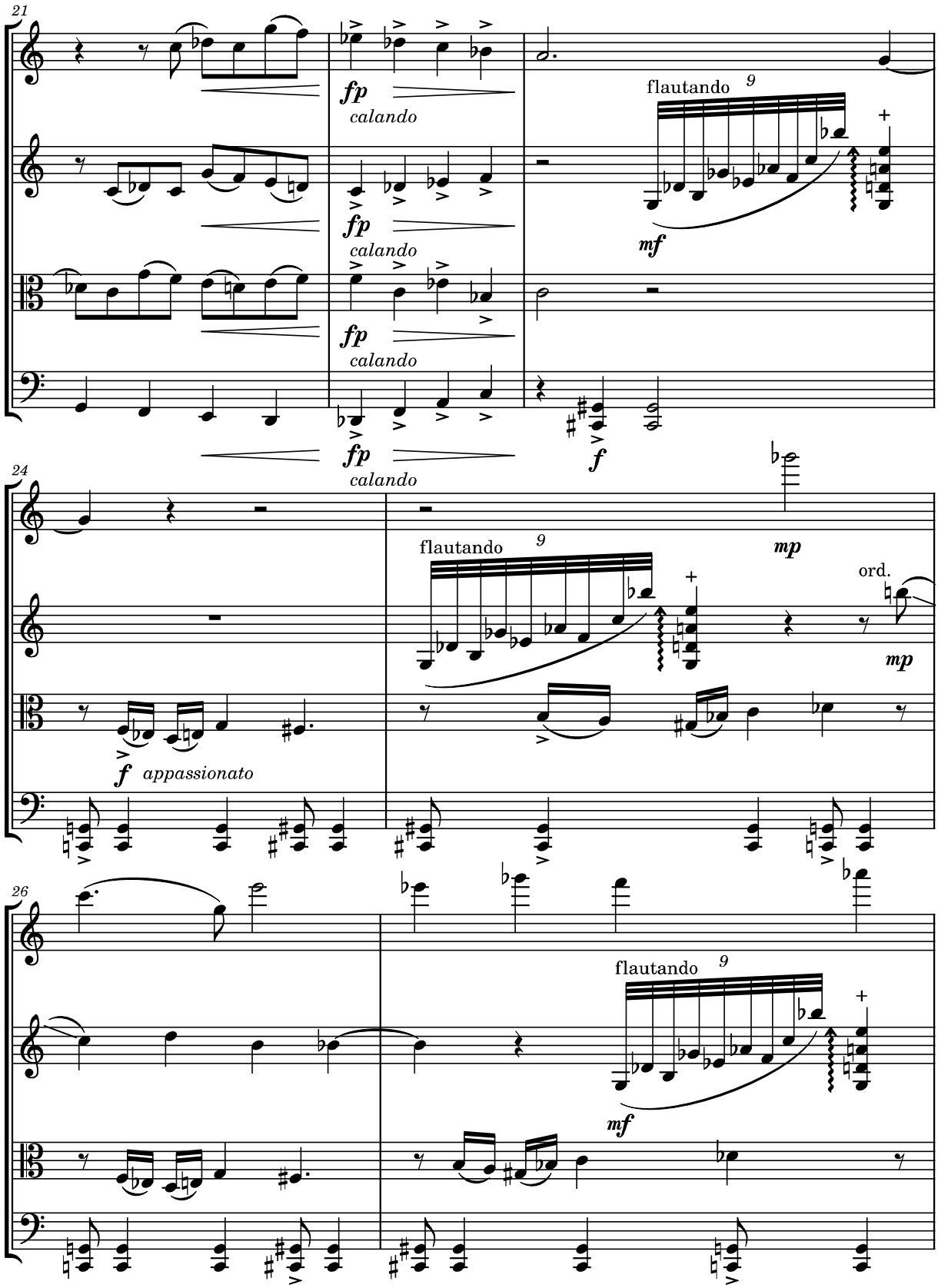
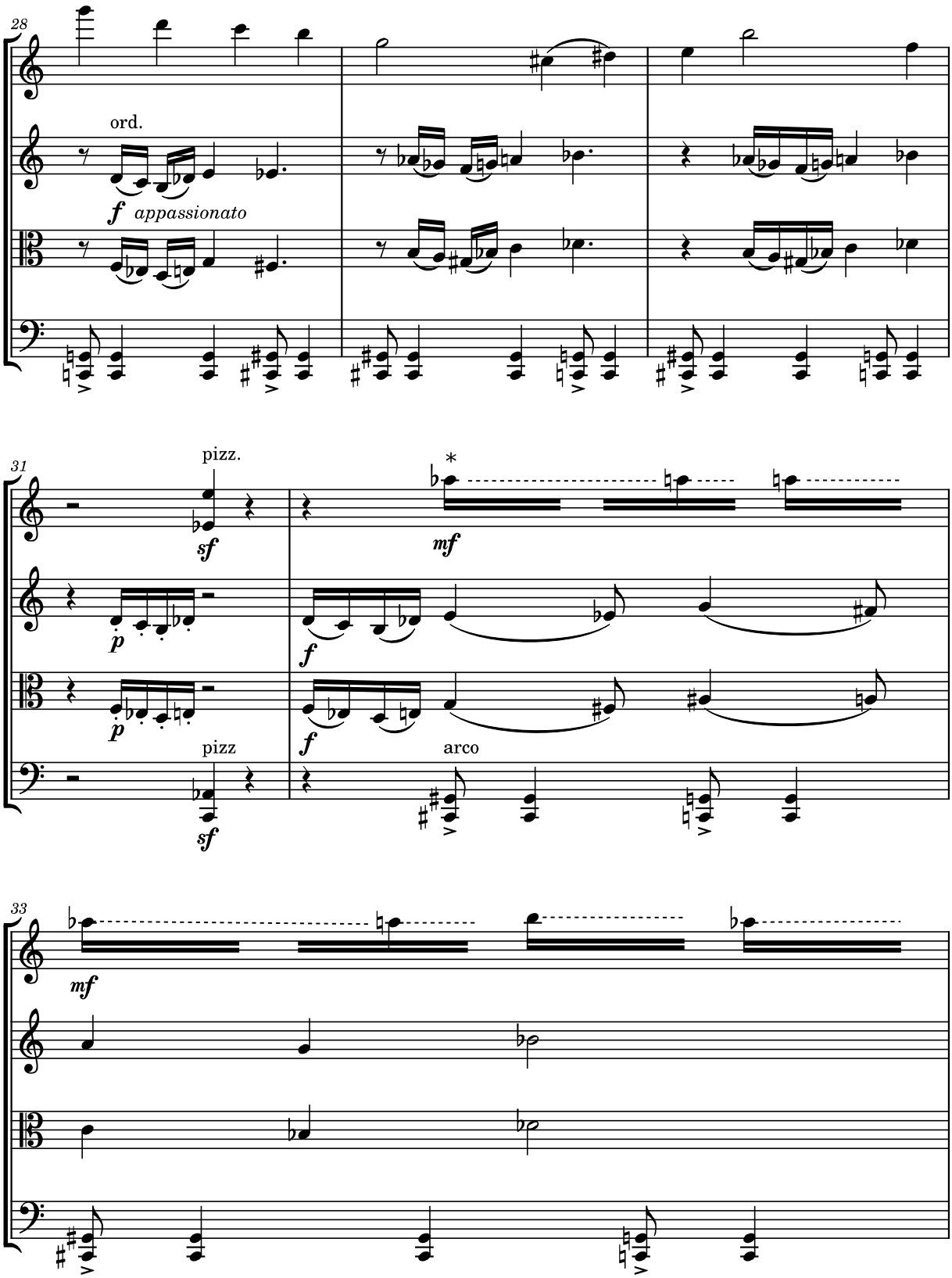

8
sf
sf
sf
sf


11
p
sff
mp
p
sff
mp
p
sff
mp
p
sff
mp

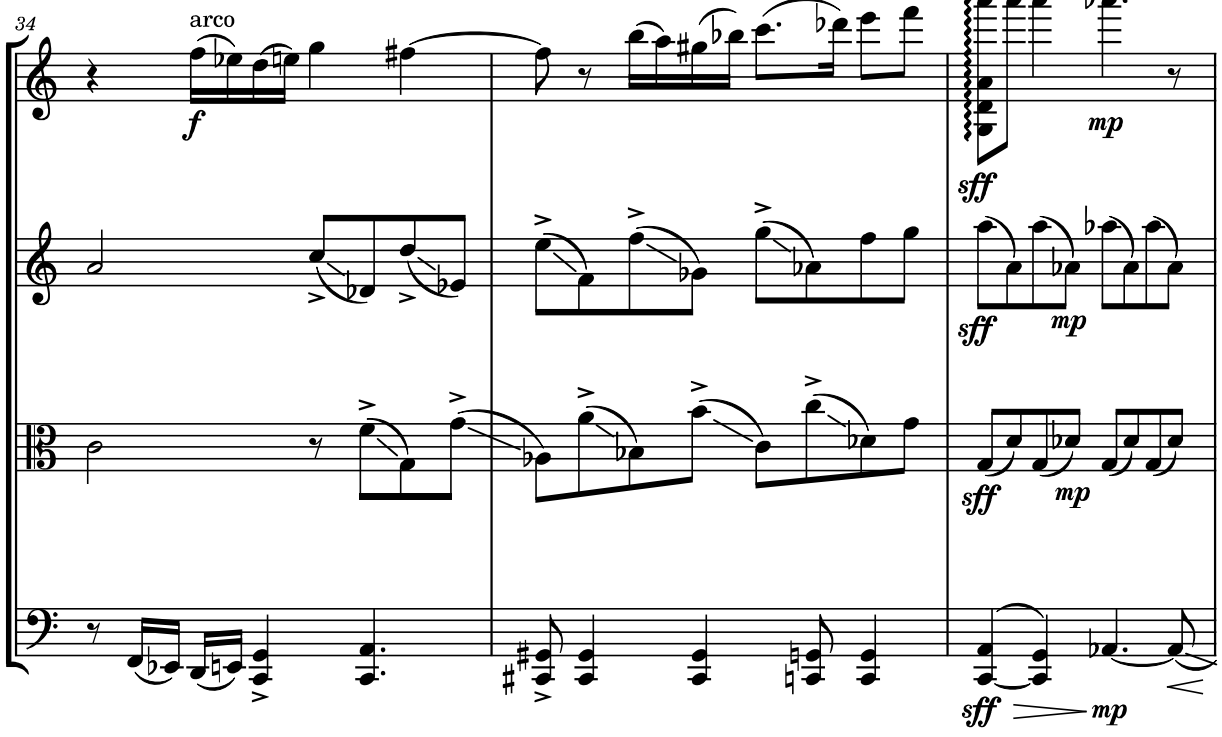

14
p
con gran espressione
p
con gran espressione
p
con gran espressione
p
con gran espressione

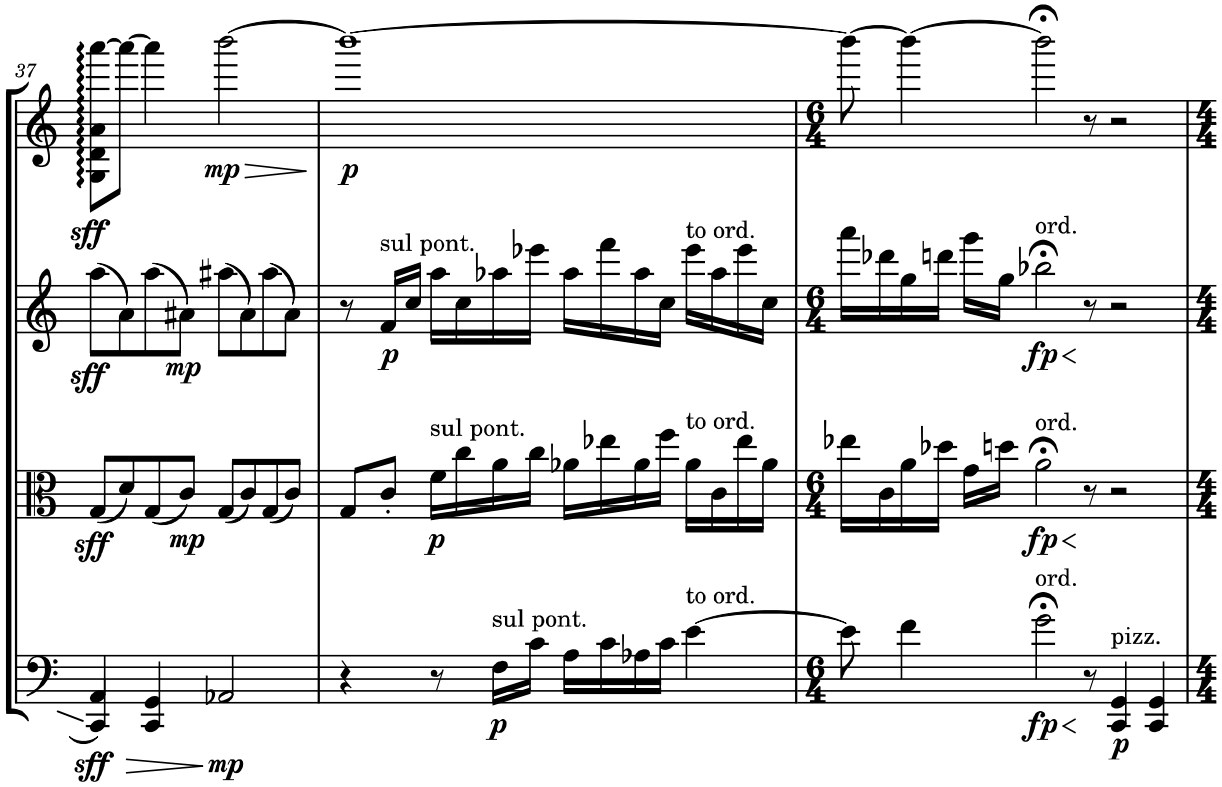

17
f
sff
p
f
sff
p
f
sff
p
f
sff
p

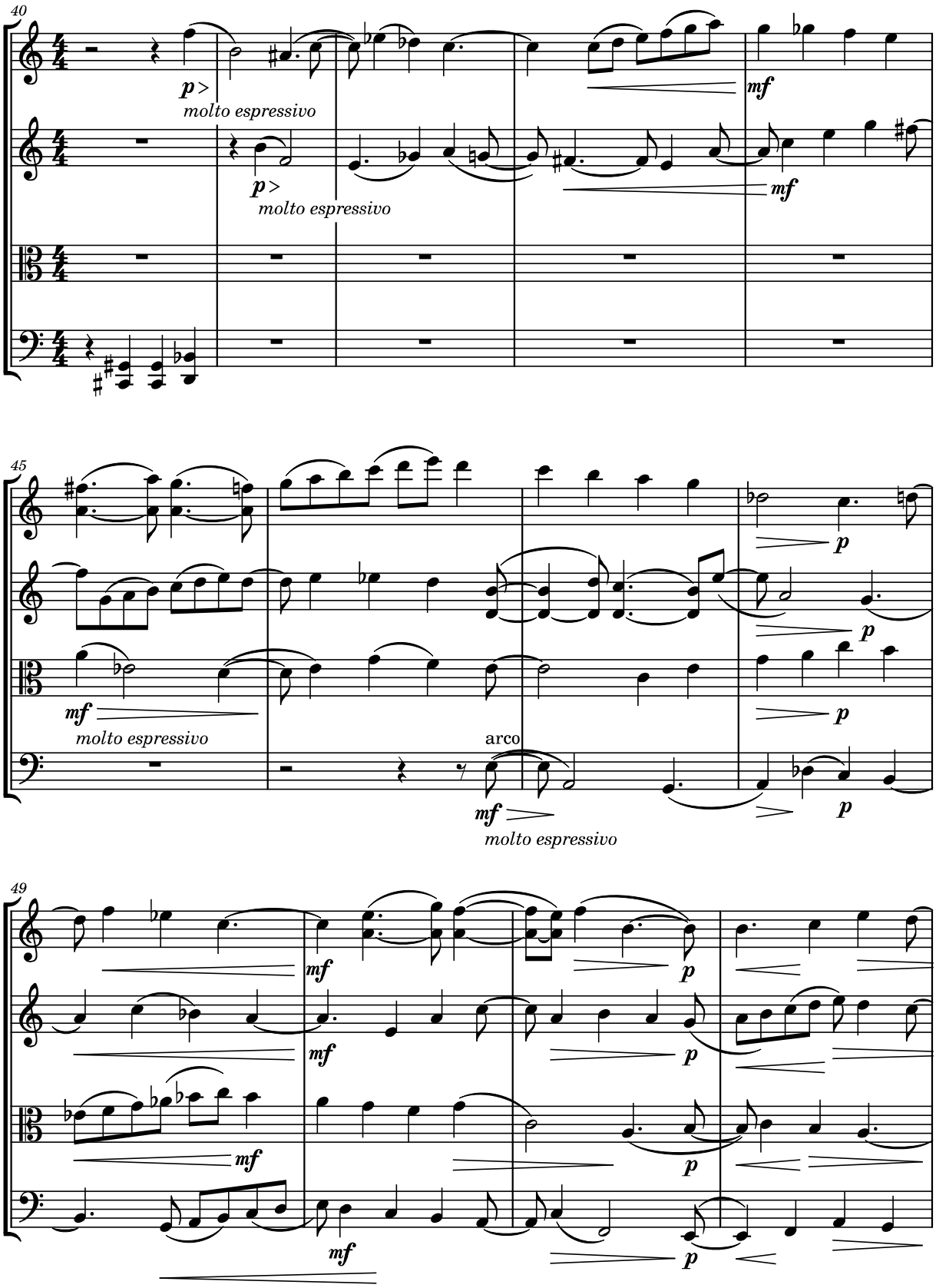

21
fp
calando
flautando
9
mf
f
24
mp
ord.
f
appassionato
26

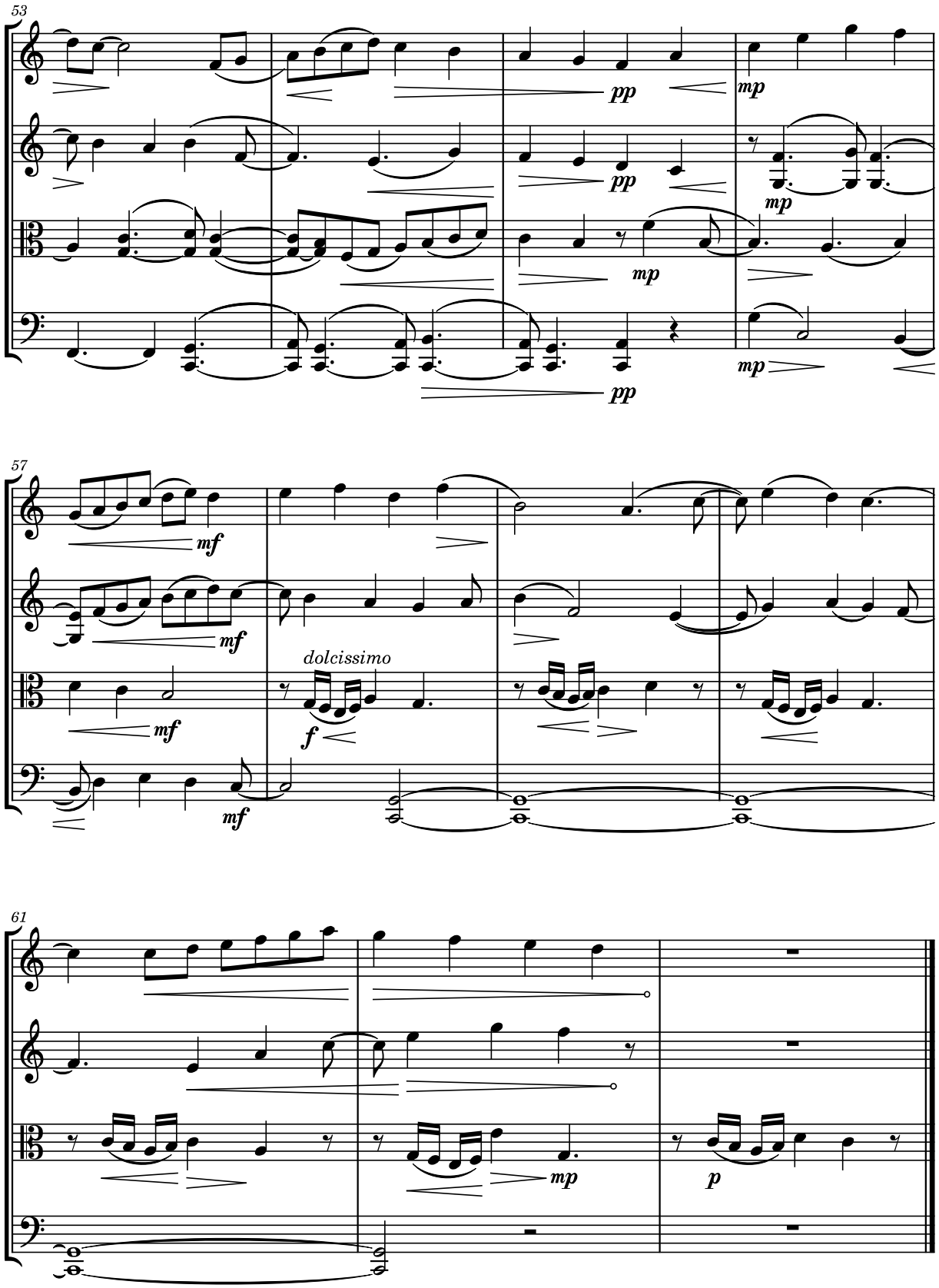


*play notes indiscriminately at the indicated pitch

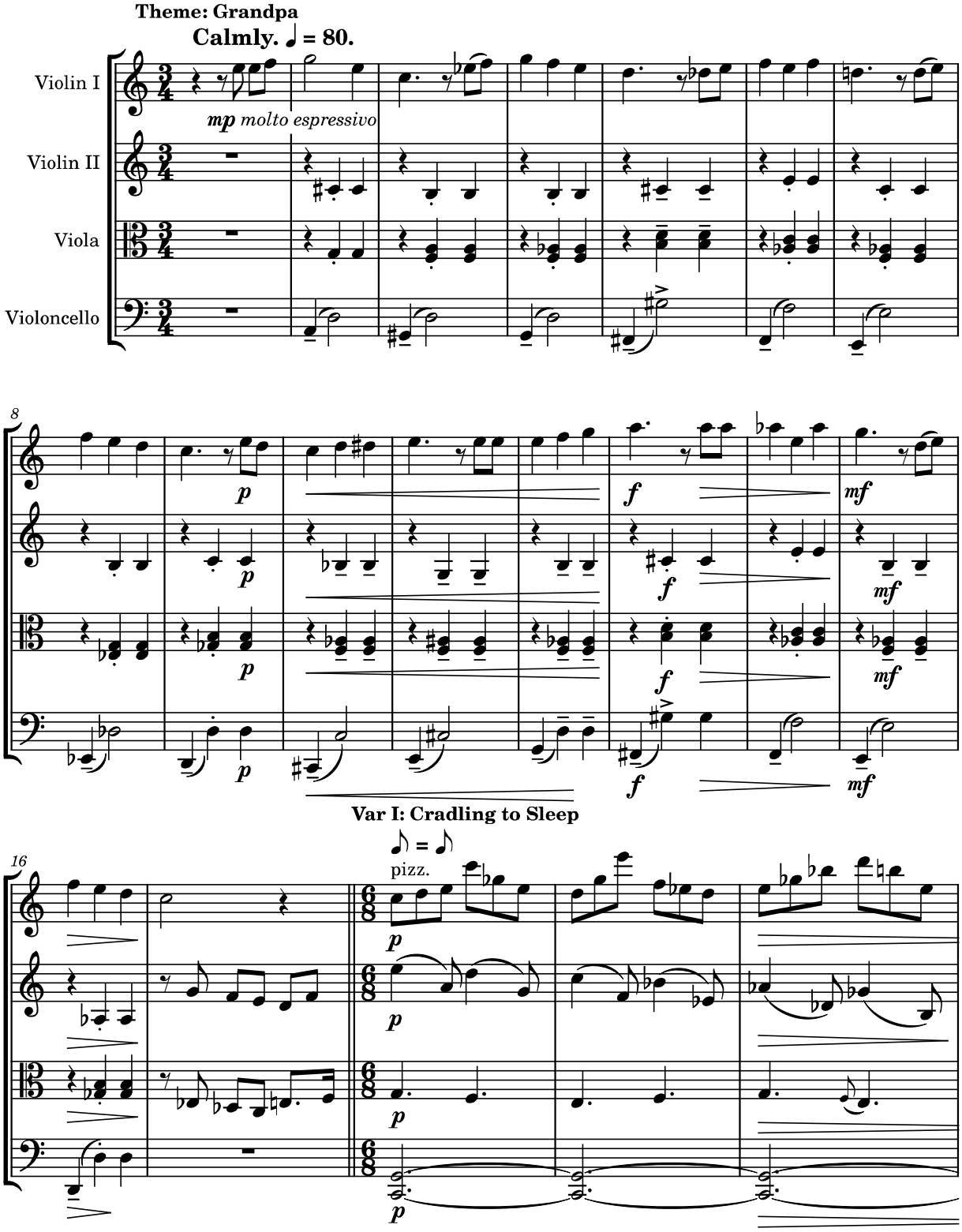

34
arco
f
sff
mp
sff
mp
sff
mp
sff
mp

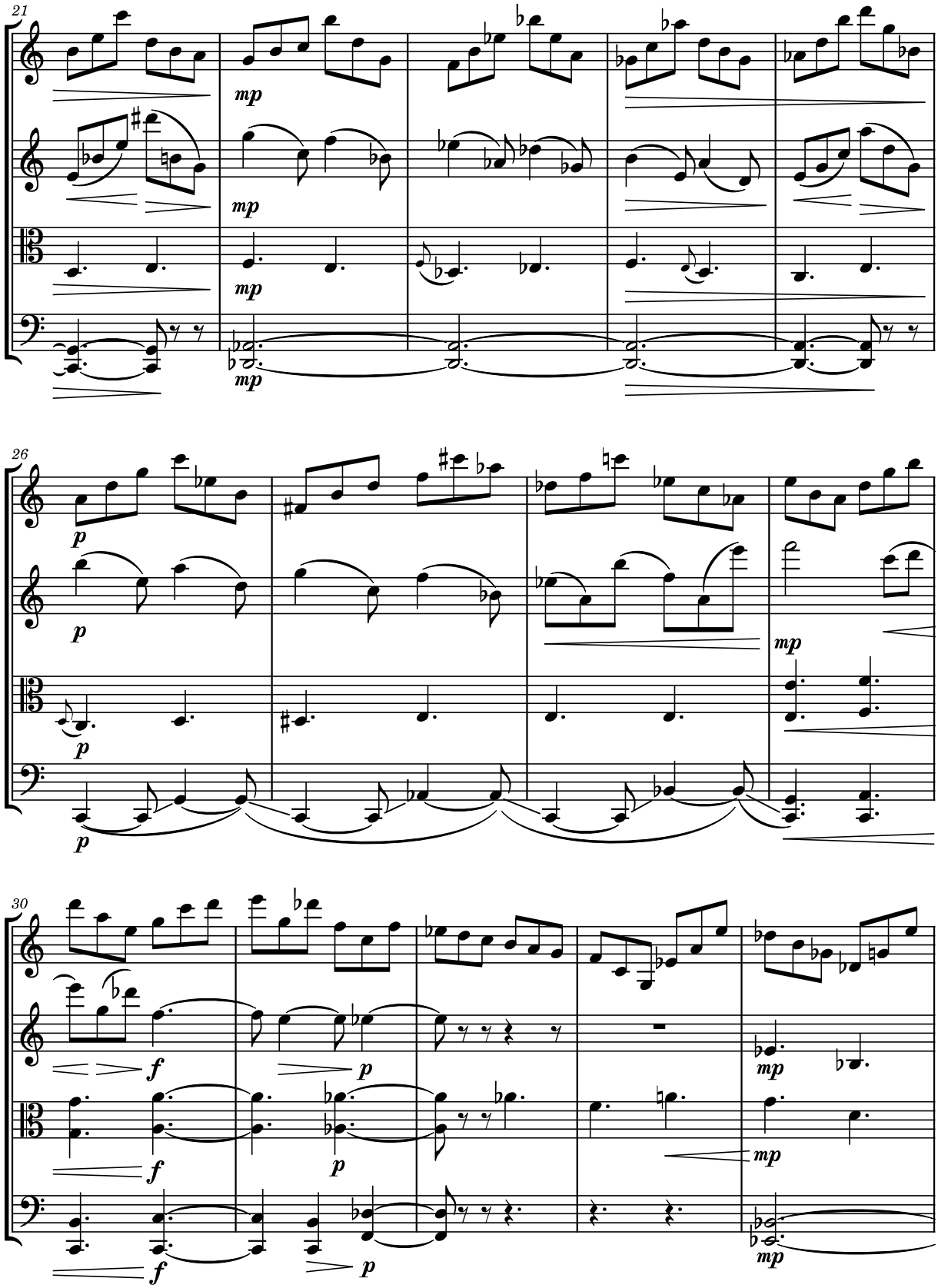

37
sff
mp
p
sff
mp
sul pont.
p
to ord.
ord.
fp
sff
mp
sul pont.
p
to ord.
ord.
fp
sff
mp
sul pont.
p
to ord.
ord.
fp
pizz.
p


40
p >
molto espressivo
p >
molto espressivo
mf
mf
45
mf
molto espressivo
arco
mf
molto espressivo
p
p
p
49
mf
mf
mf
mf
p
p
p


53
pp
mp
pp
mp
mp
pp
57
mf
mf
mf
dolcissimo
f
mf
61
mp
p

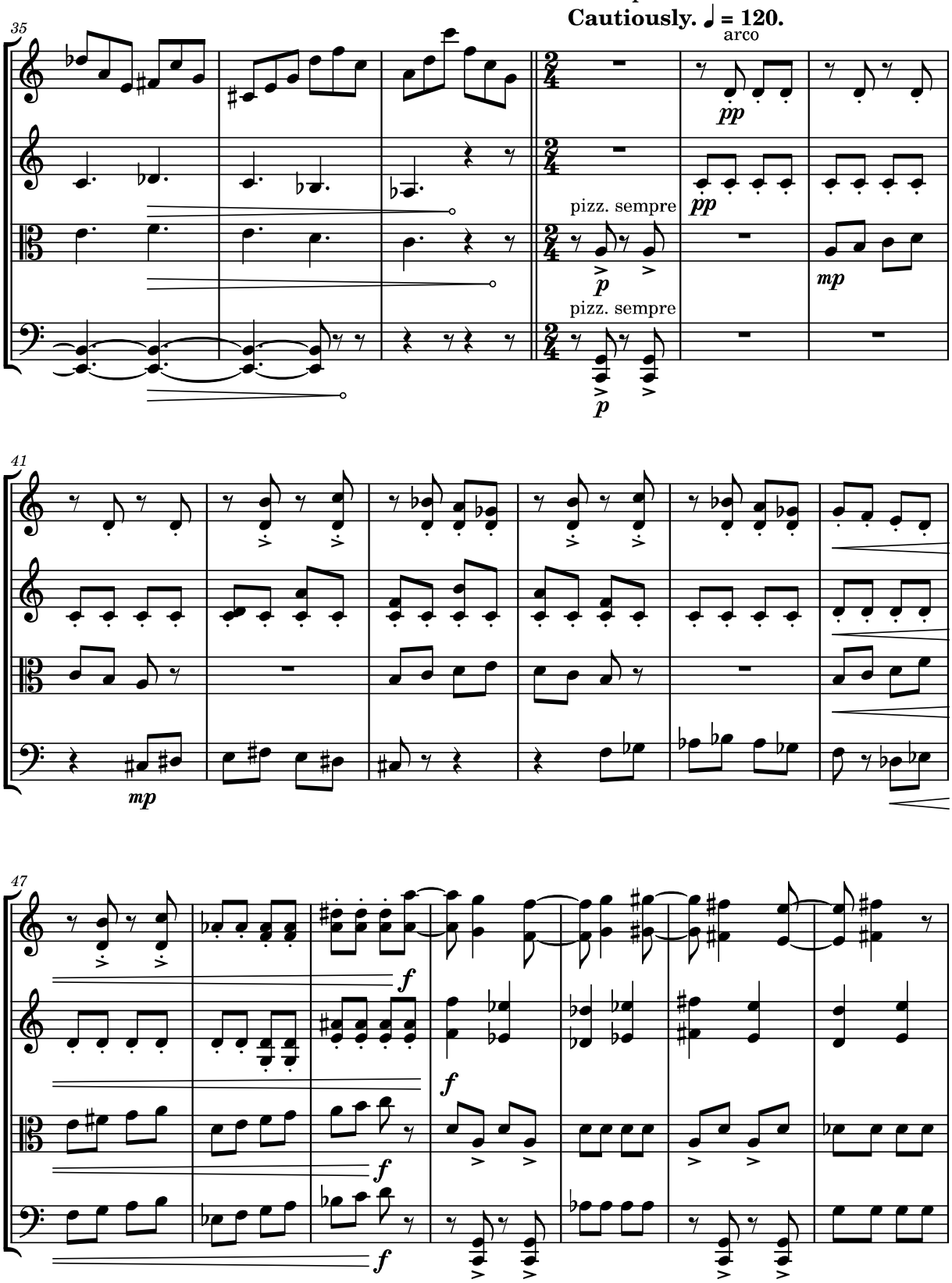
II. Grandpa's Lullaby

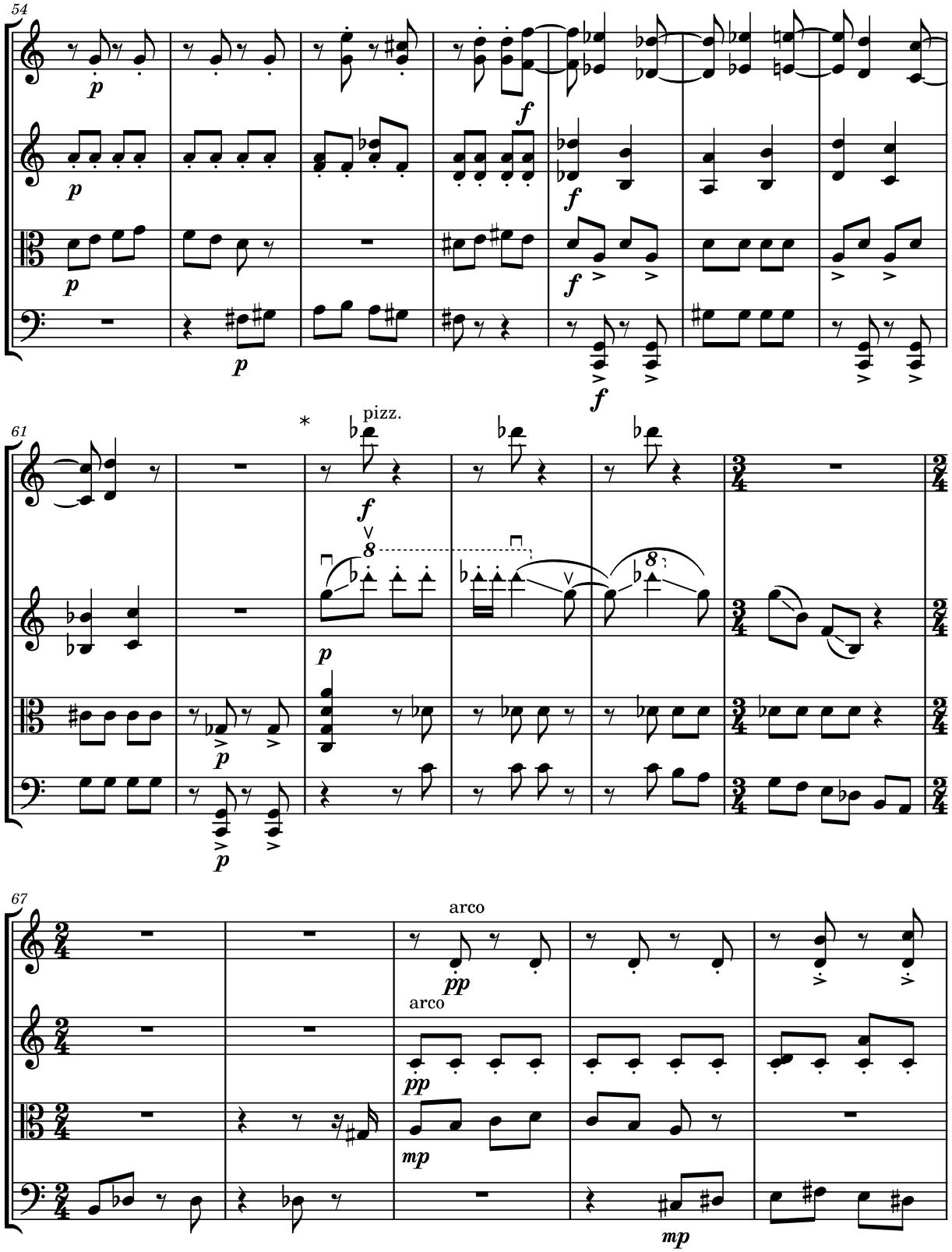



21
mp
mp
mp
mp
26
p
p
p
mp
30
f
p
f
p
f
p
mp
mp
mp

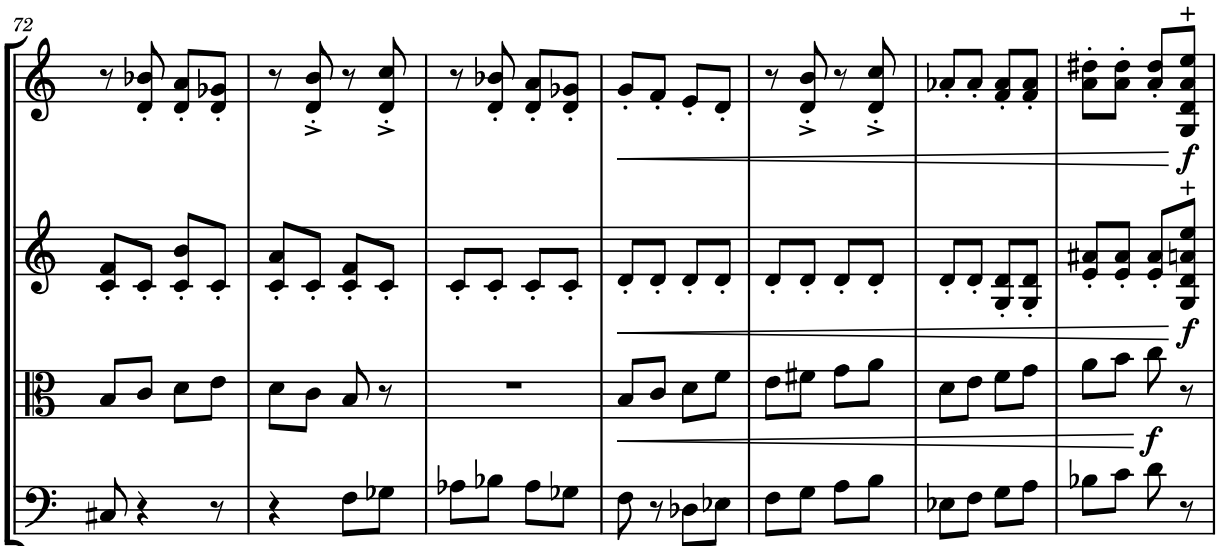
Var. II: Tiptoe

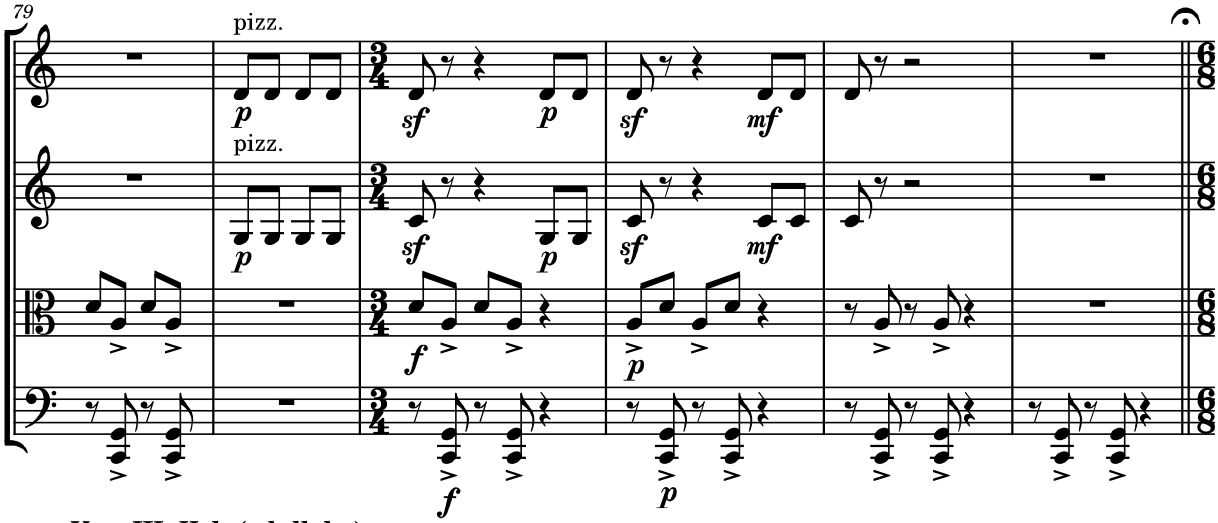
Cautiously. ♩ = 120.





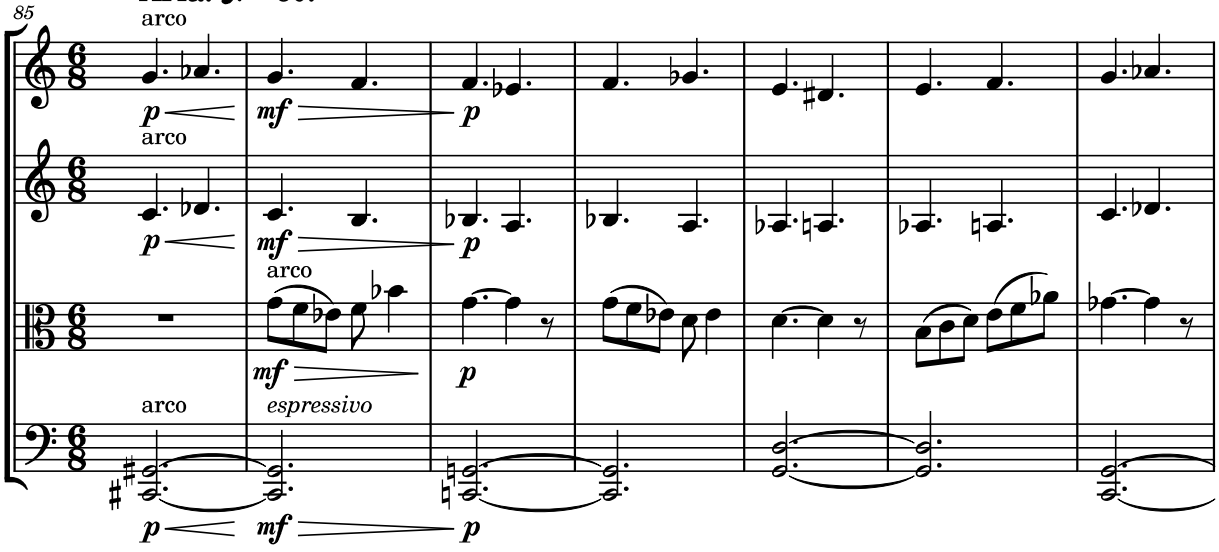
*notes can be played approximately when there is a triangle notehead.

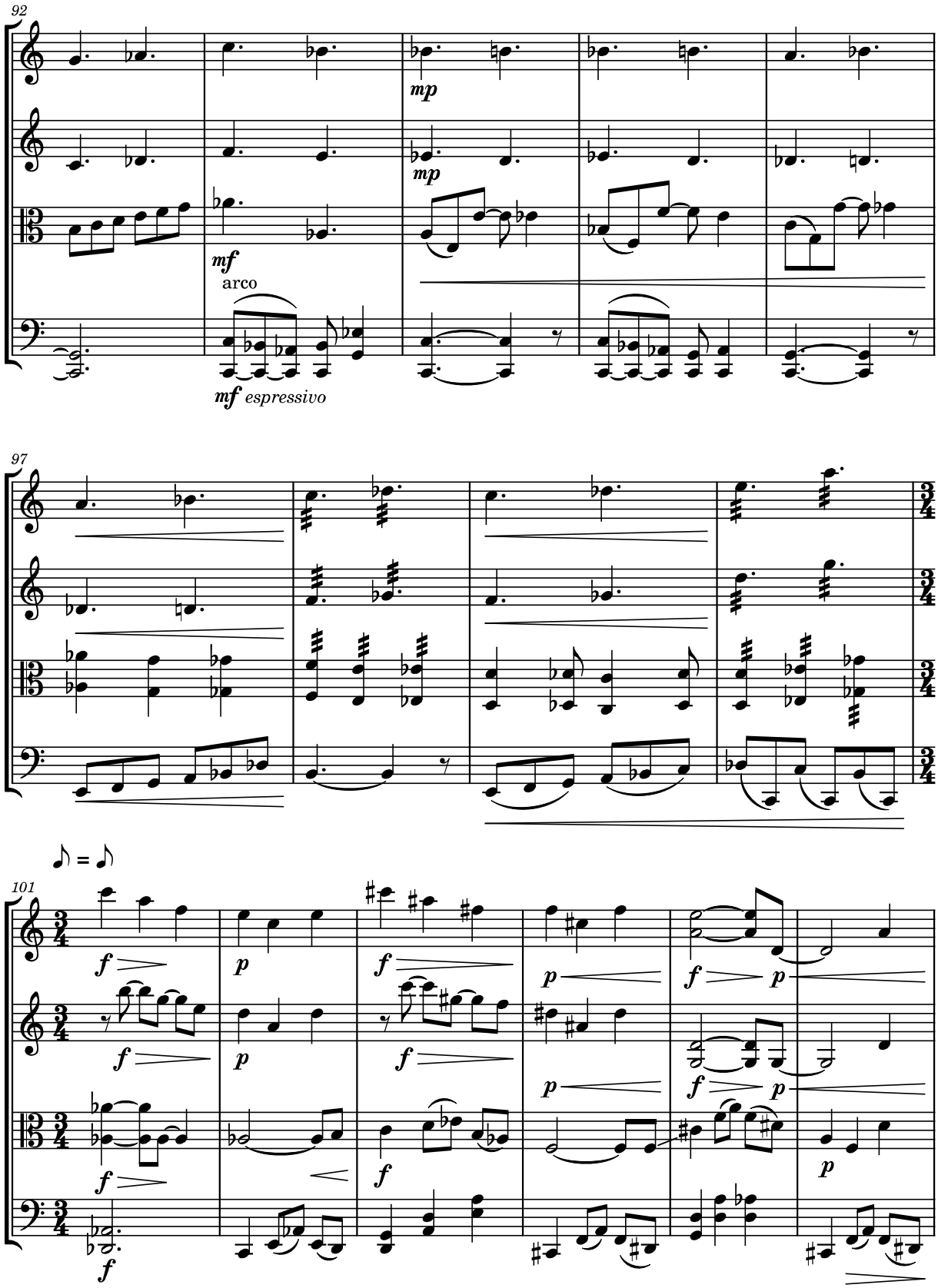


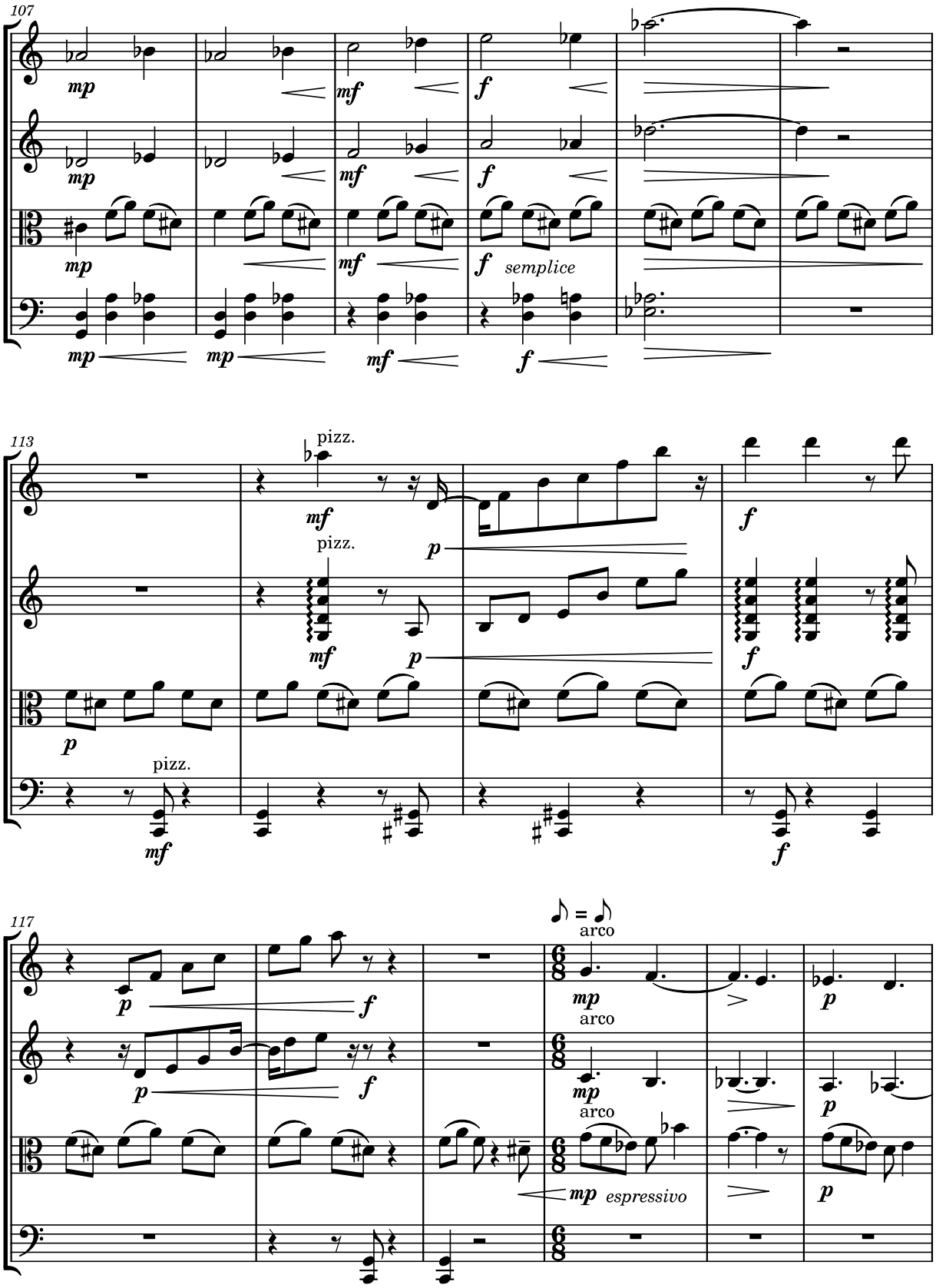


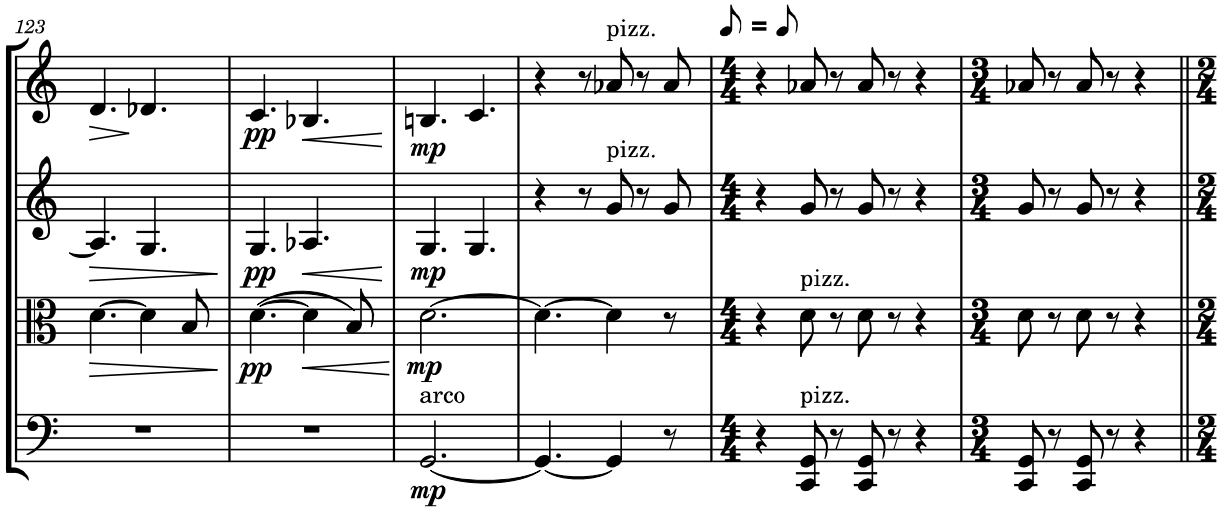
Var. III: *Hele* (a lullaby)

Aria. ♩. = 60.



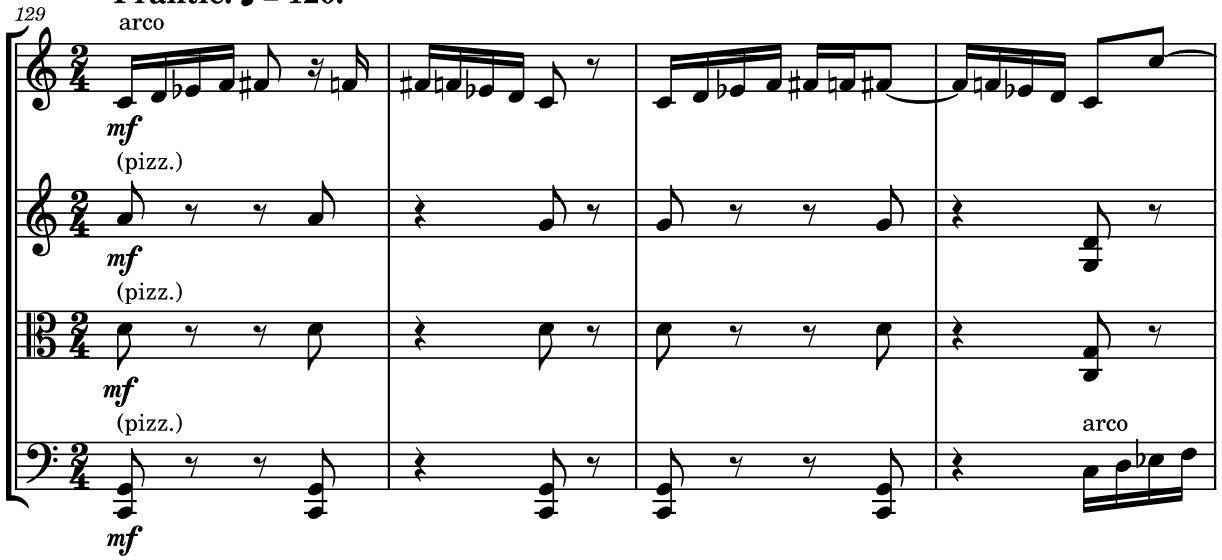

92
mp
mp
mf
arco
mf espressivo
97
101
f
p
f
p
f
p
f
p
f
p
f
f
p
f

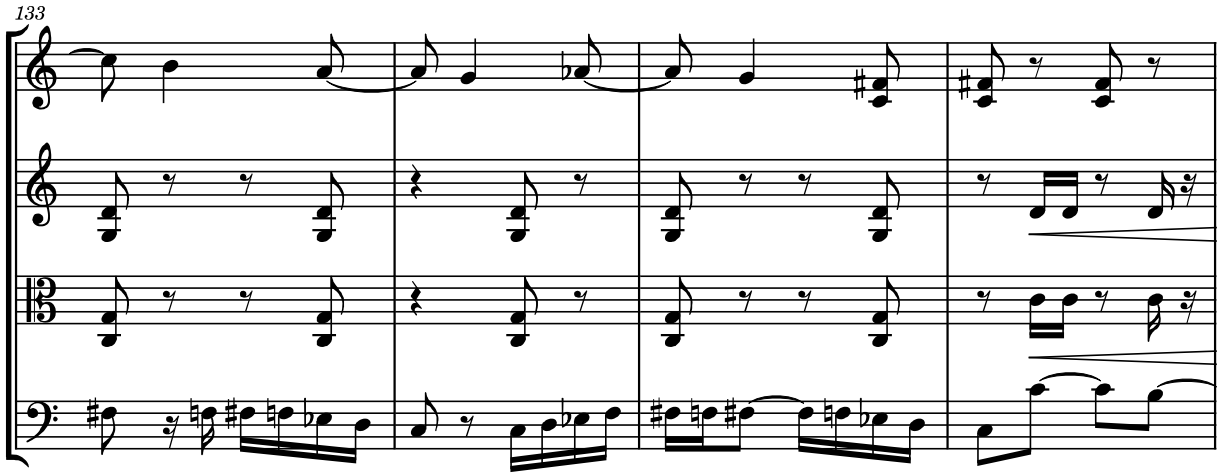

107
mp
mf
f
semplice
113
pizz.
p
117
arco
espressivo

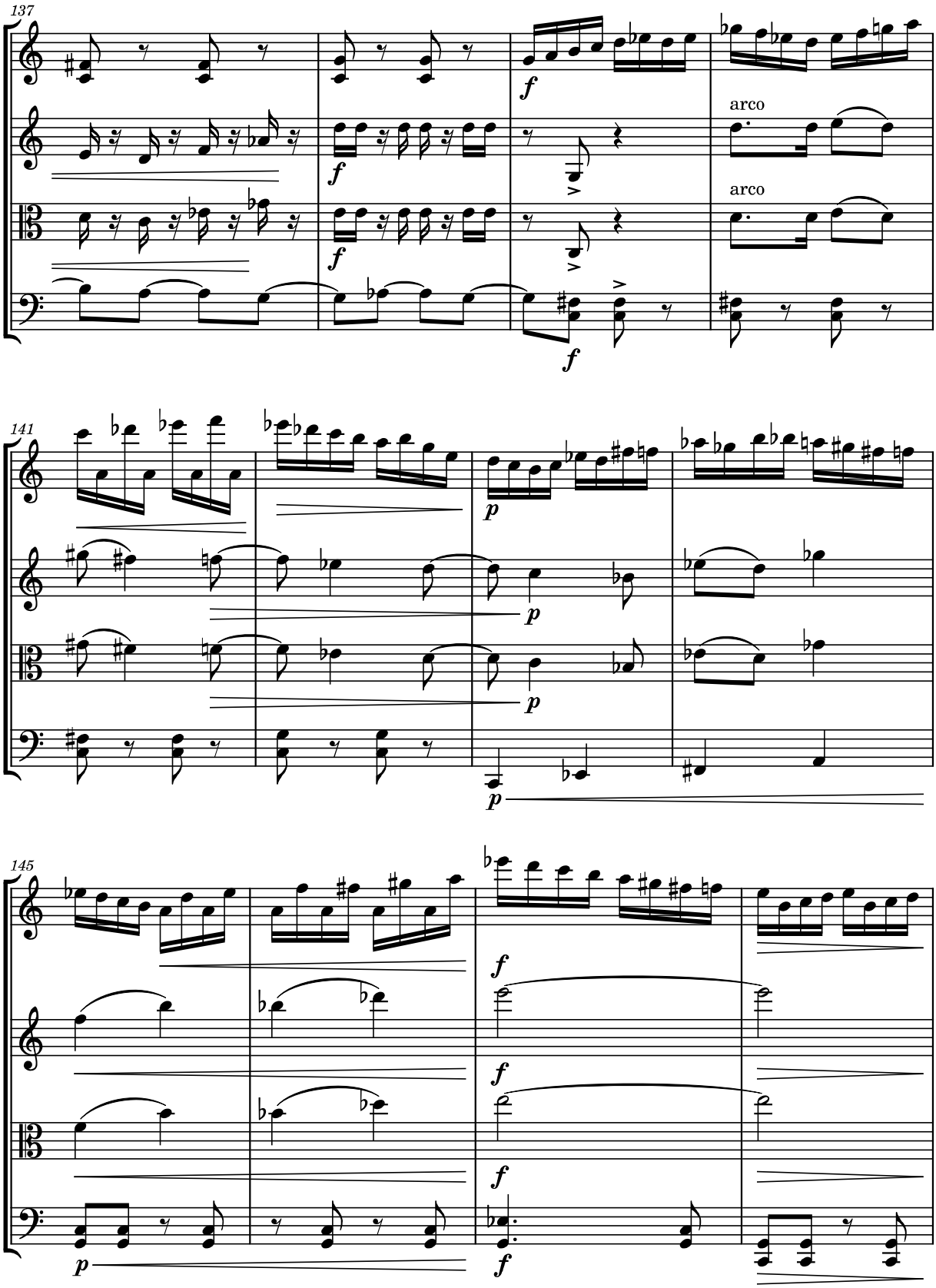


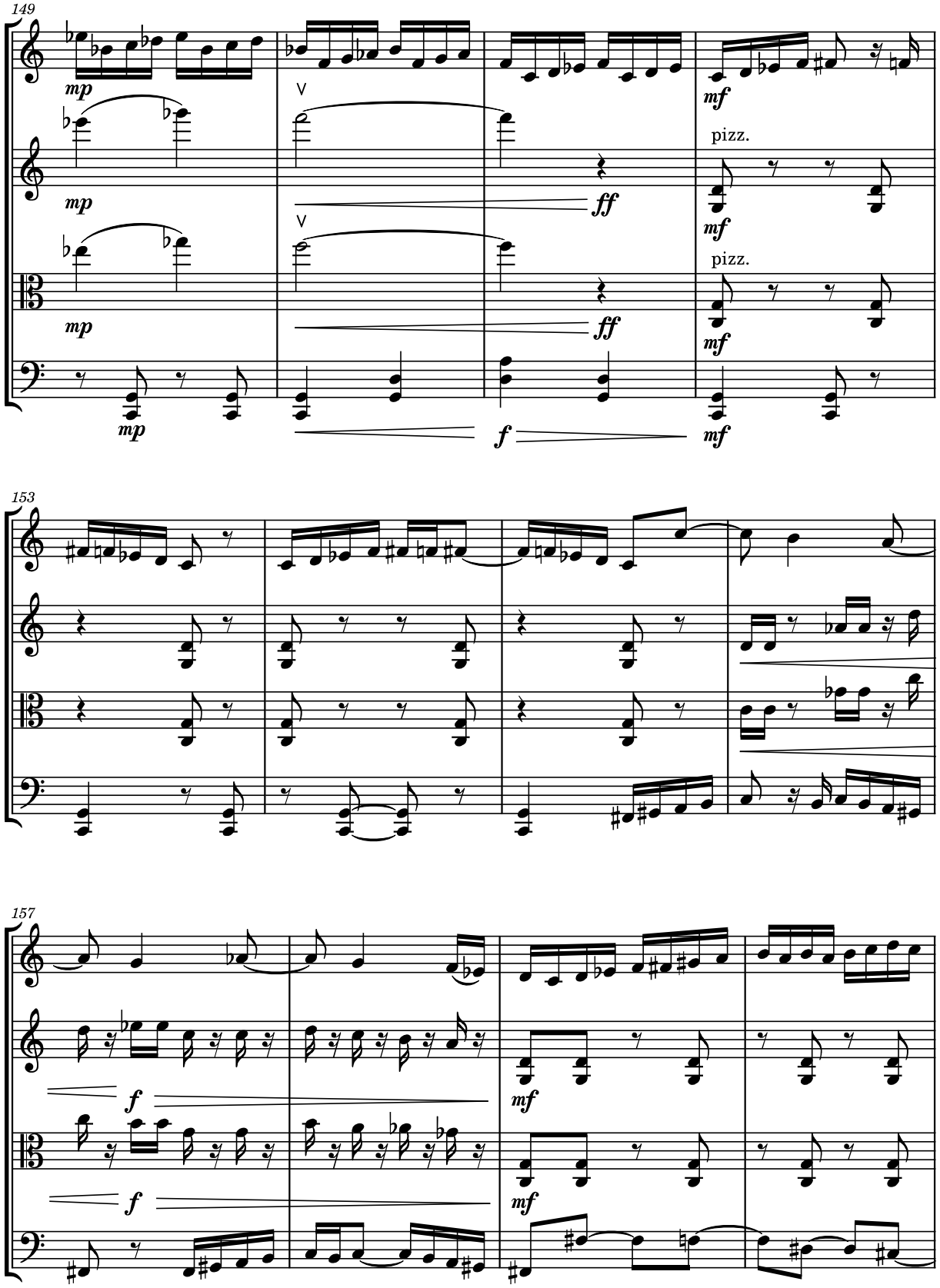
Var IV: The Chase

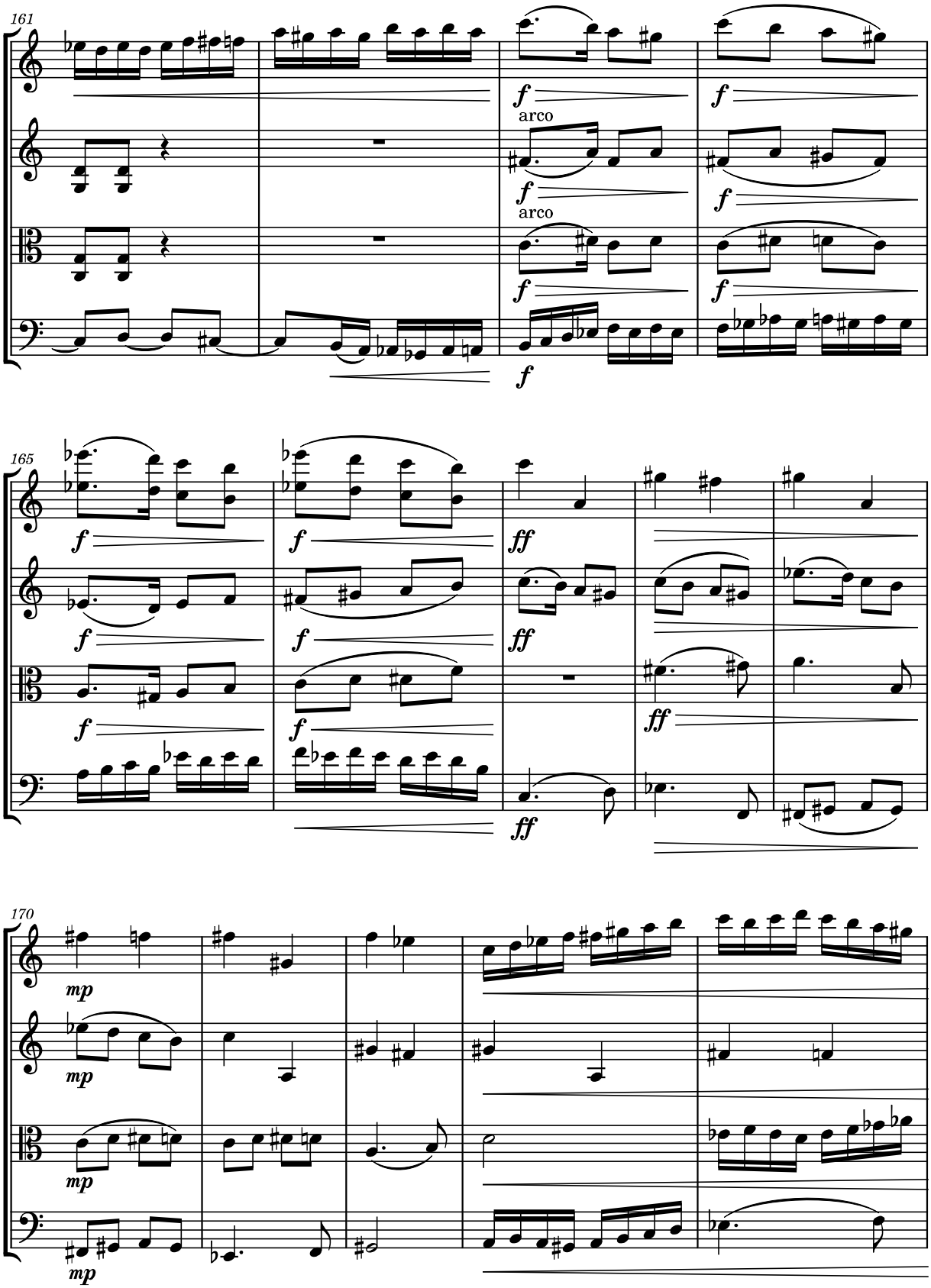
Frantic. ♩ = 120.

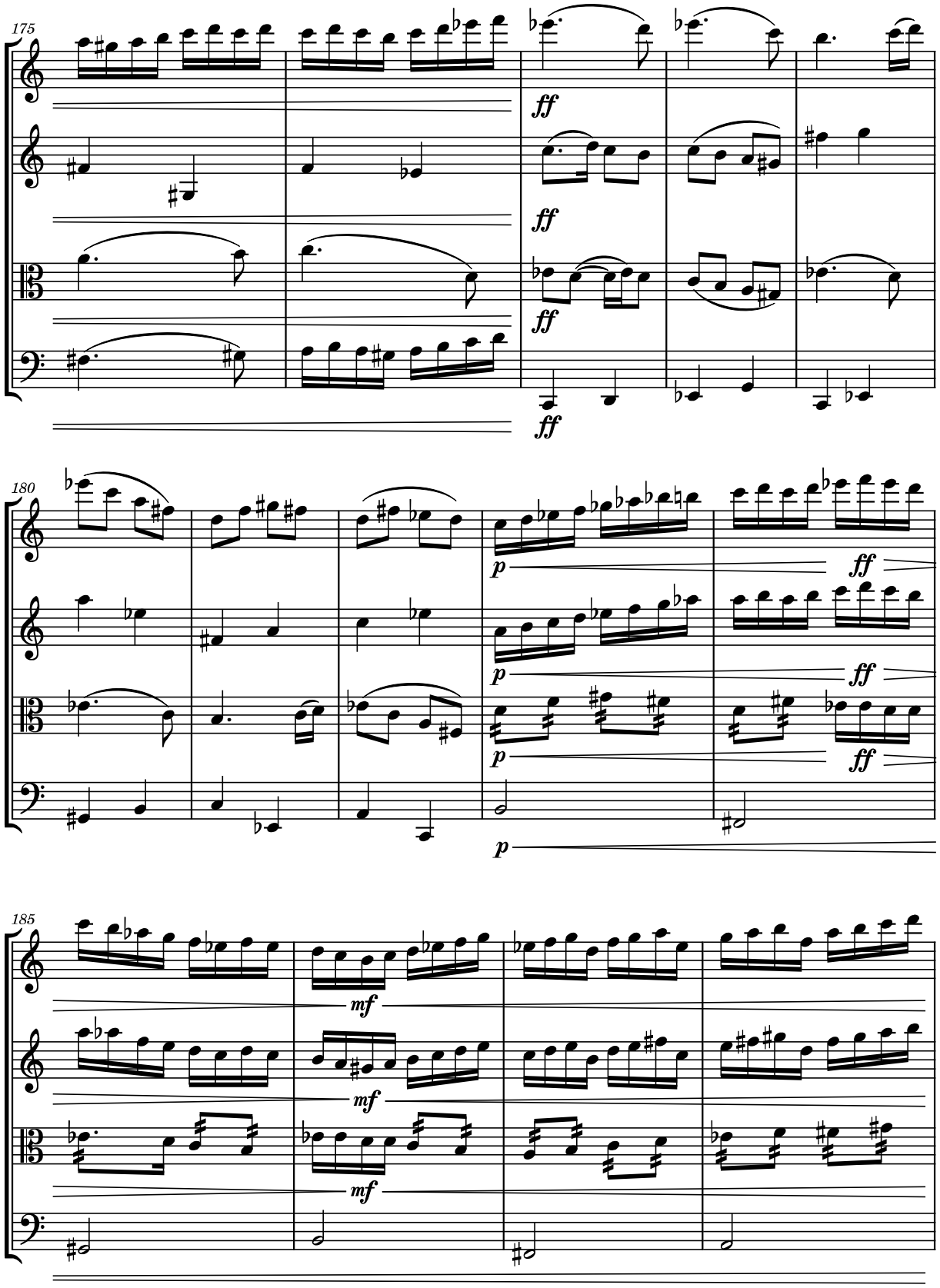





137
arco
arco
141
145


149
mp
mp
mp
mp
ff
ff
f
mf
pizz.
mf
pizz.
mf
mf
153
157
f
f
mf
mf


161
arco
arco
165
170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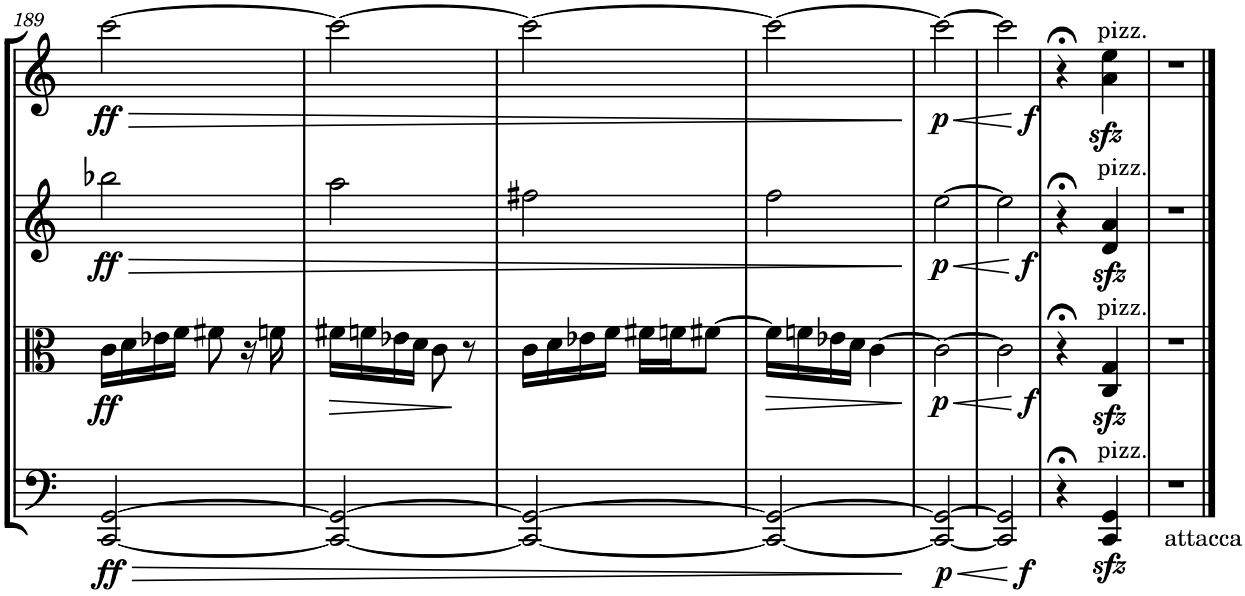
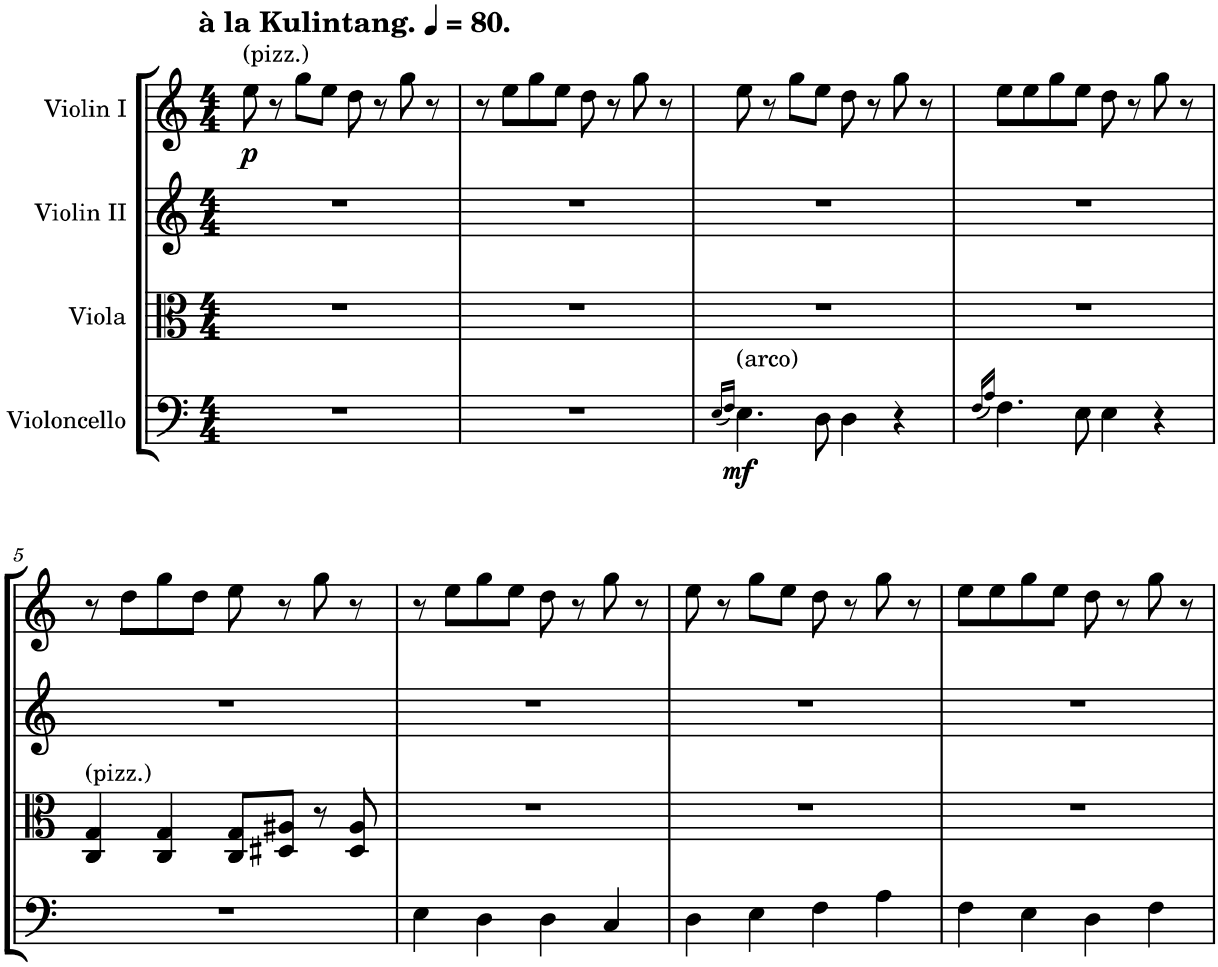
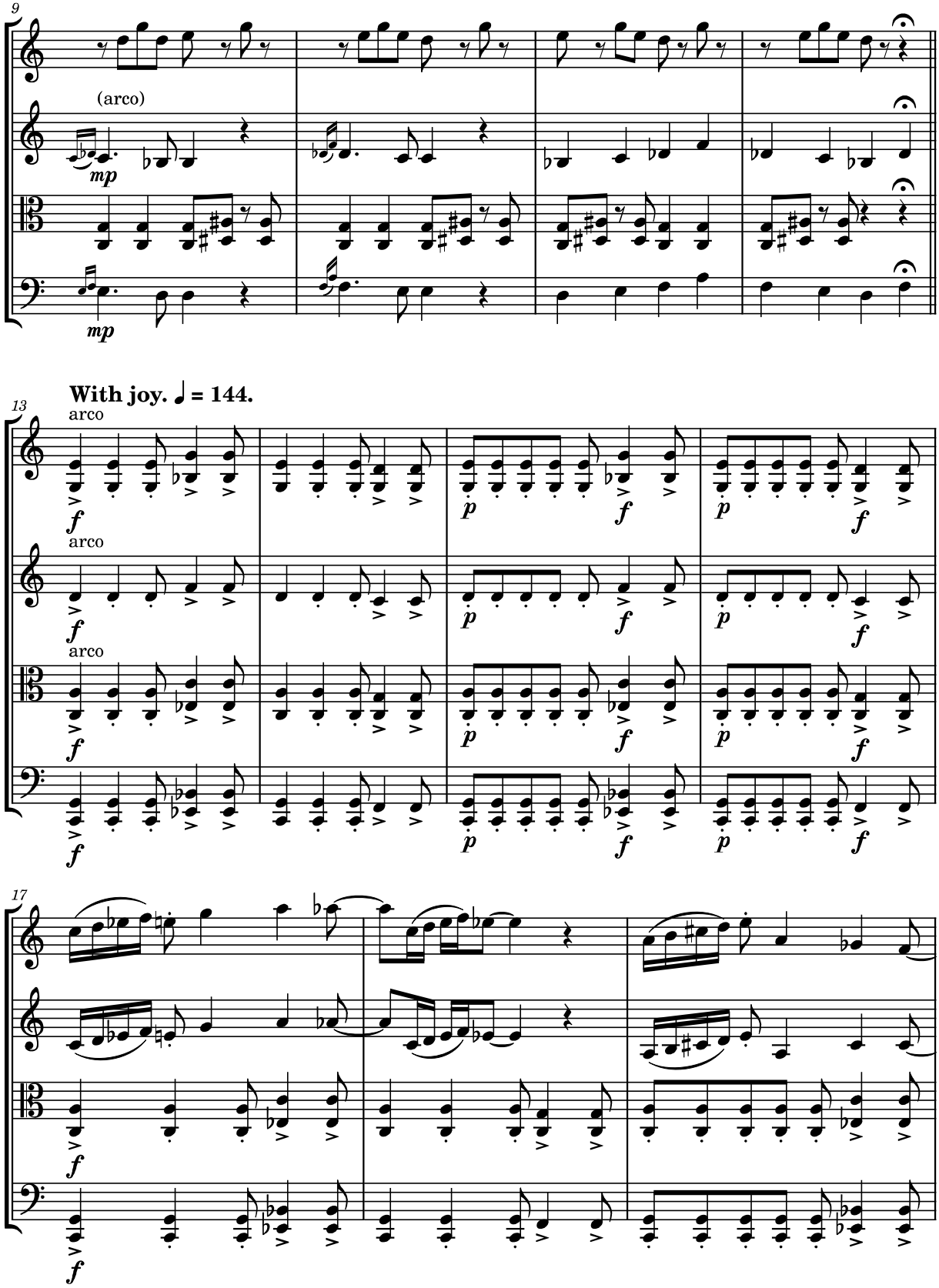
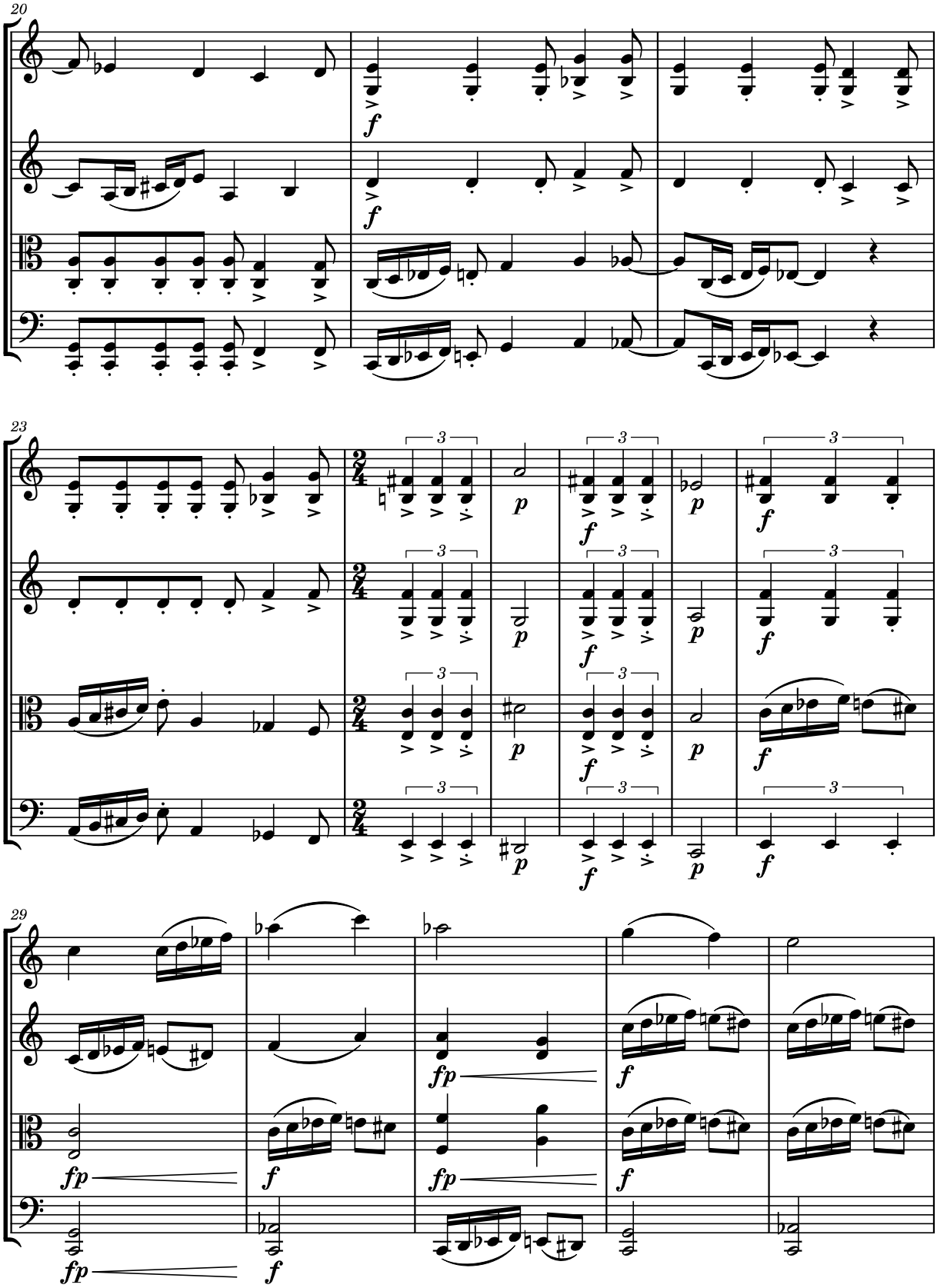
ff
ff
ff
ff
180
p
ff
p
ff
p
ff
p
185
mf
mf
mf

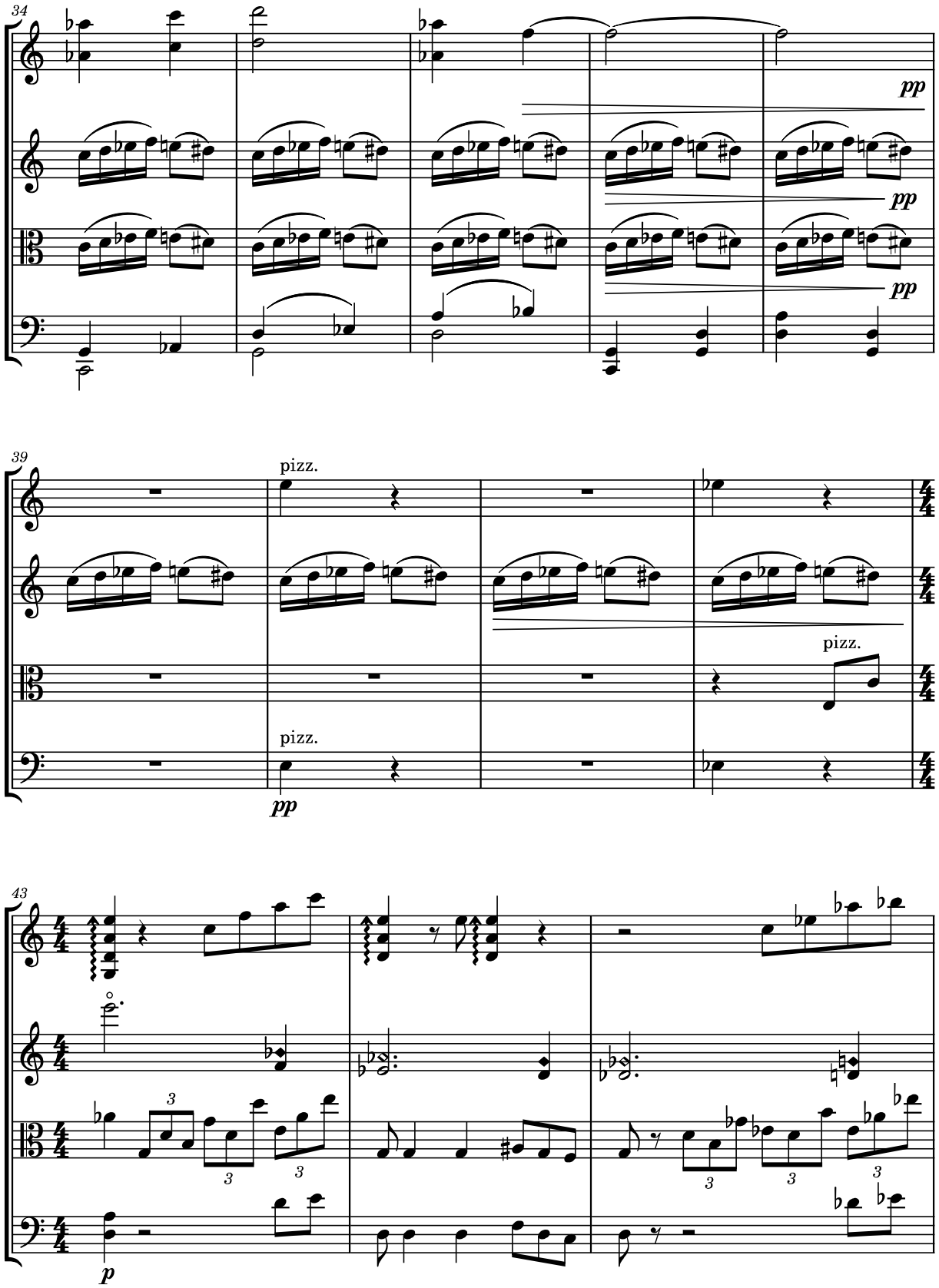


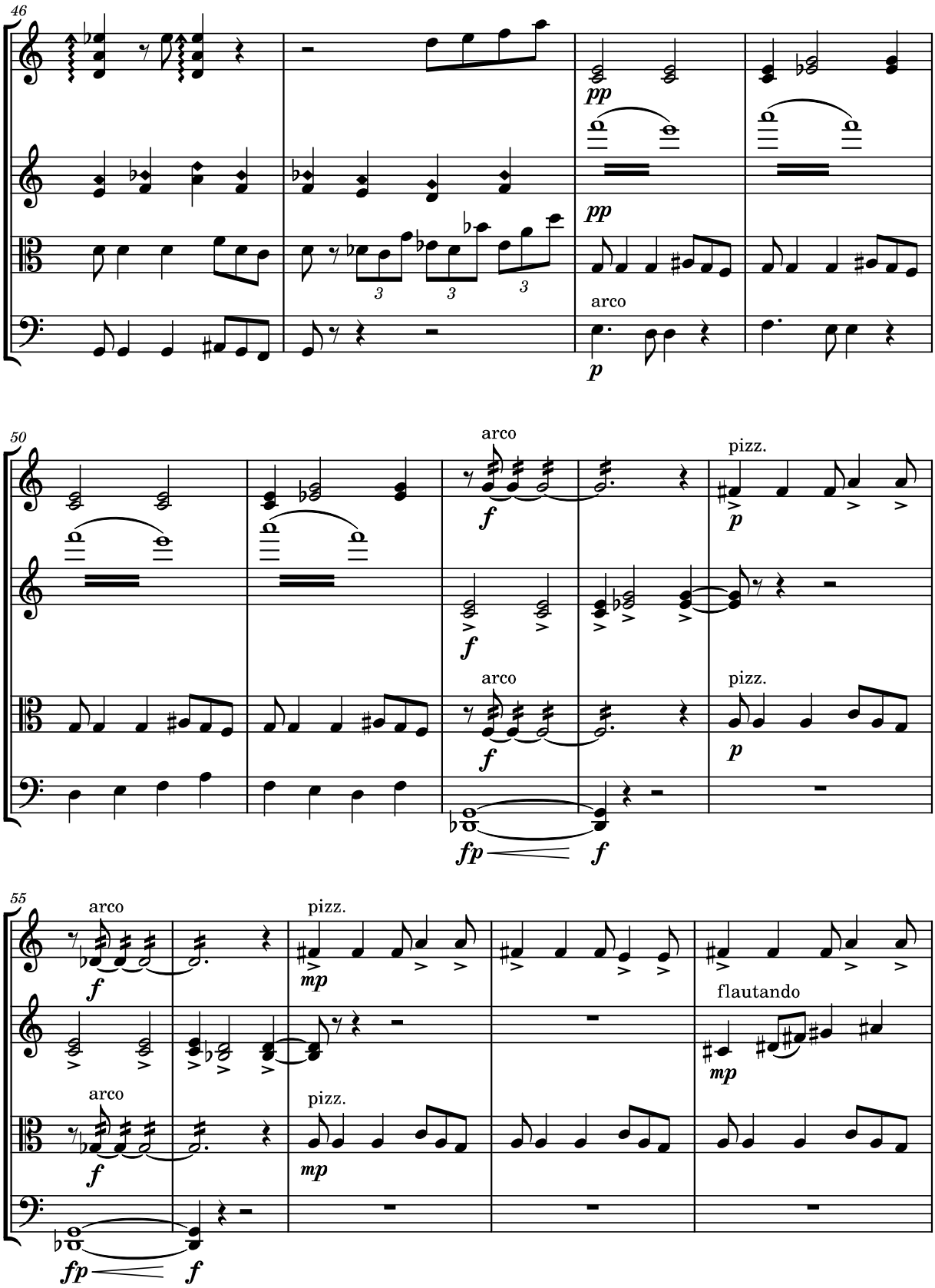
III. Bamboo Rhapsody

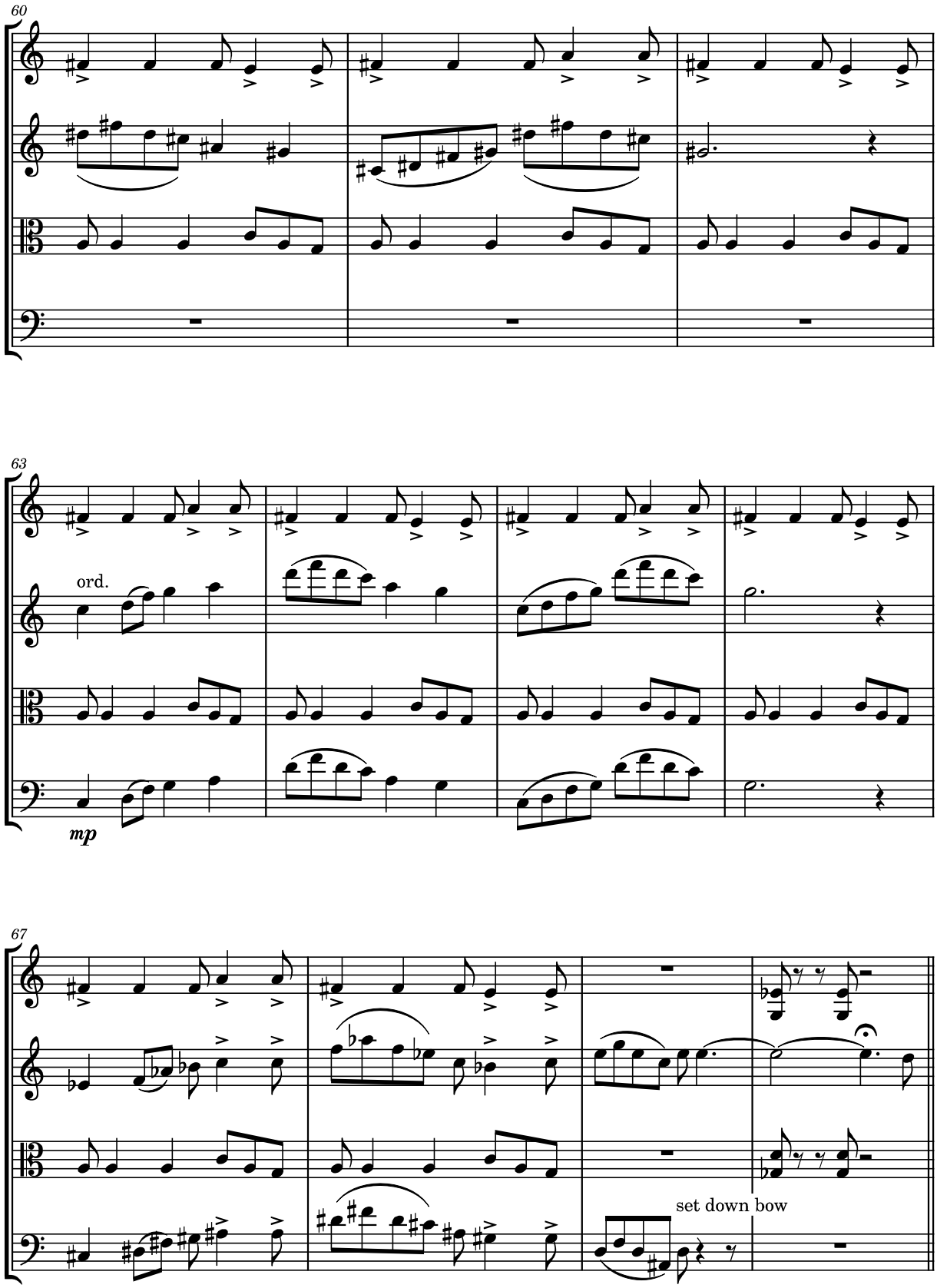


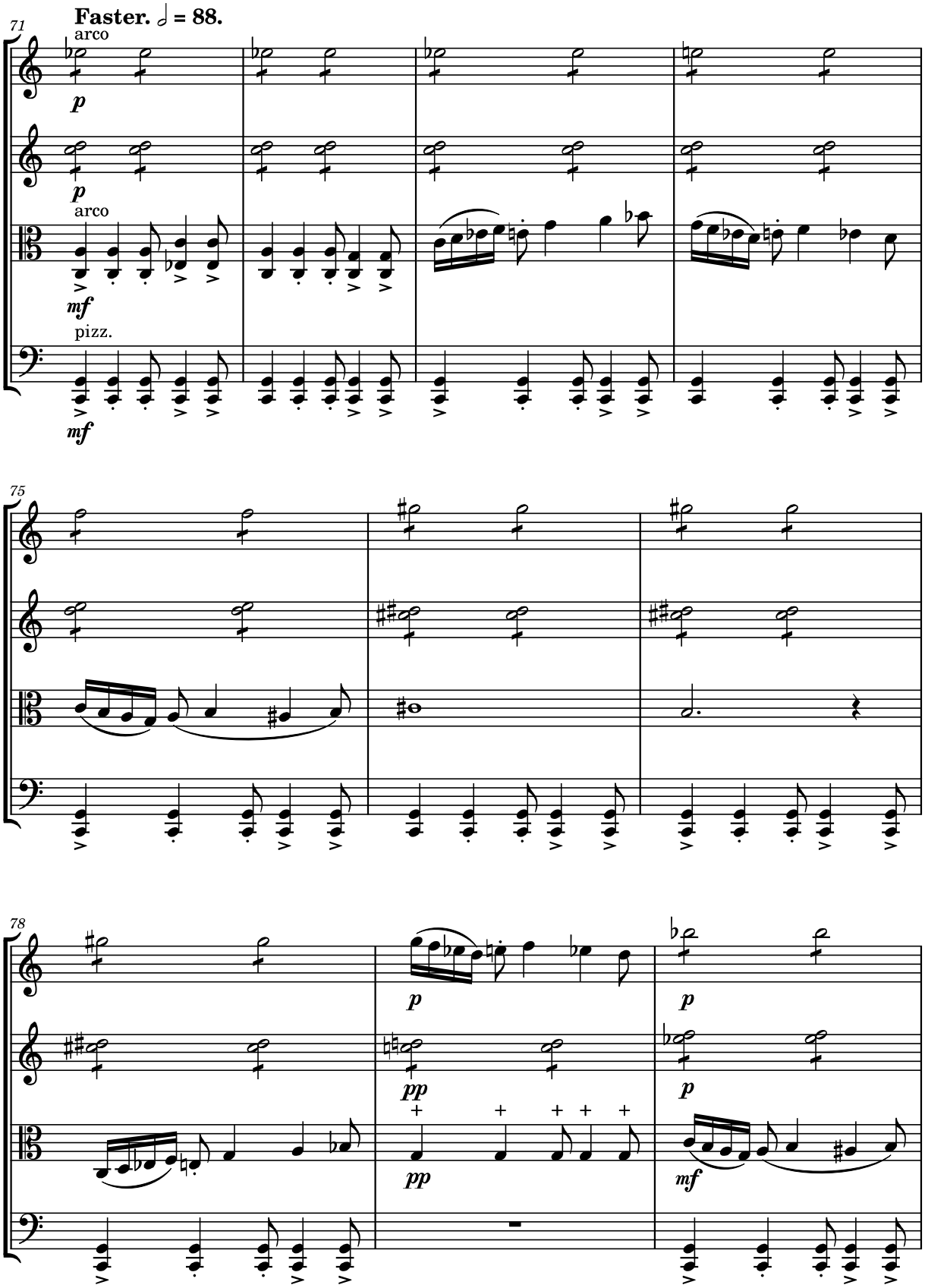

9
(arco)
mp
mp
13
With joy. ♩ = 144.
arco
arco
arco
17

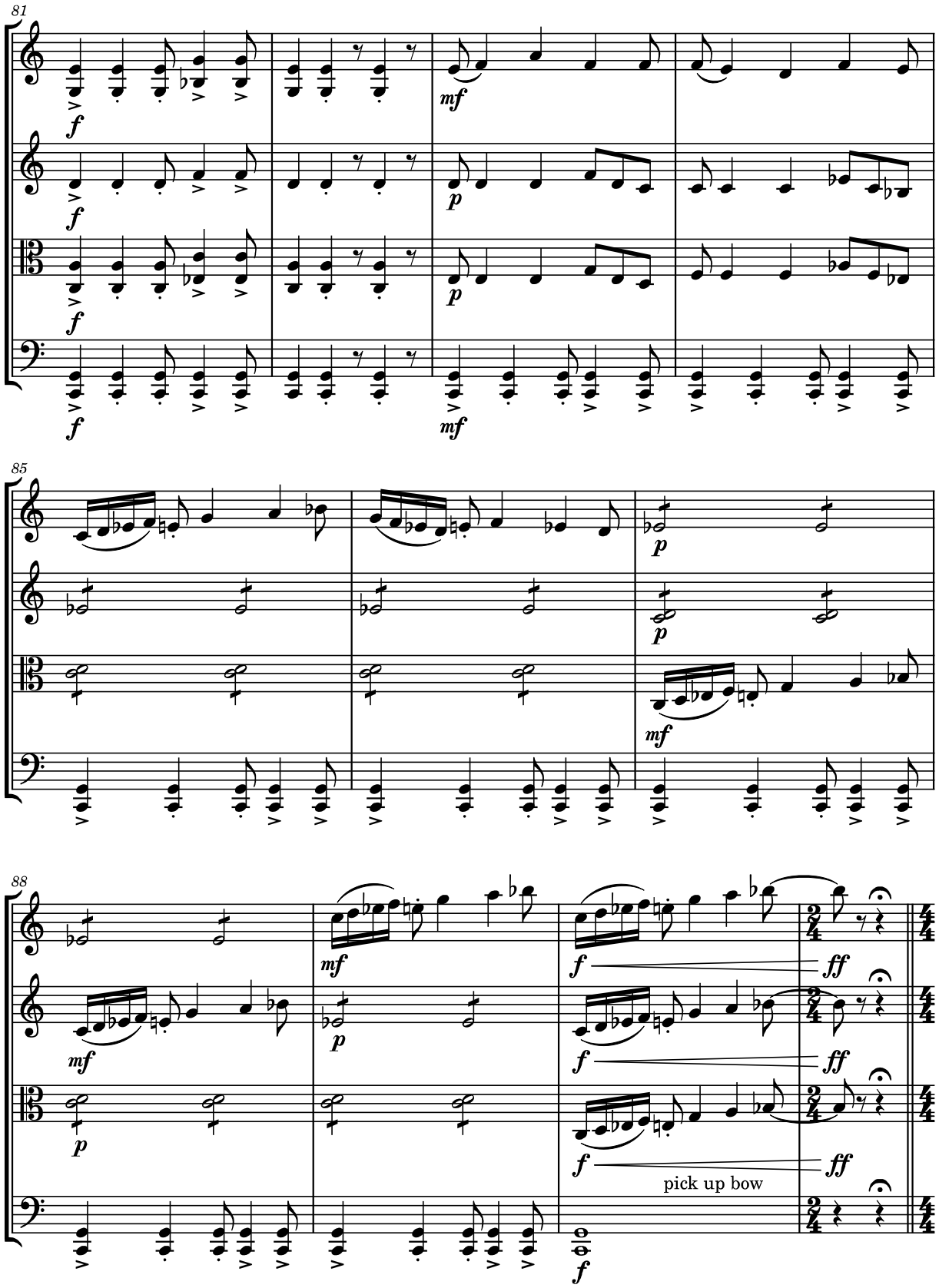

20
23
29

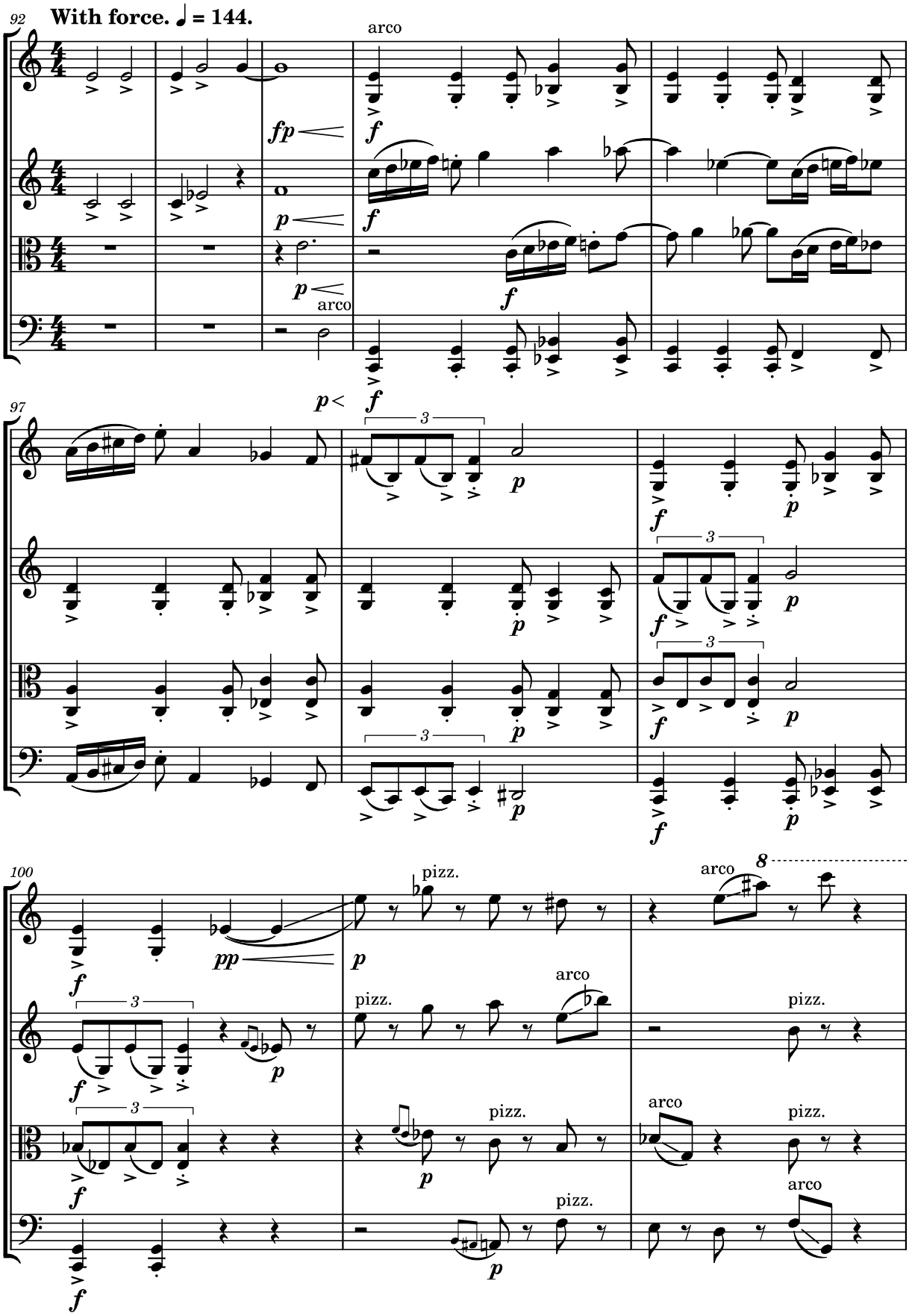

34
pp
pp
pp
39
pizz.
pizz.
pizz.
pp
43
3
3
3
3
3
p

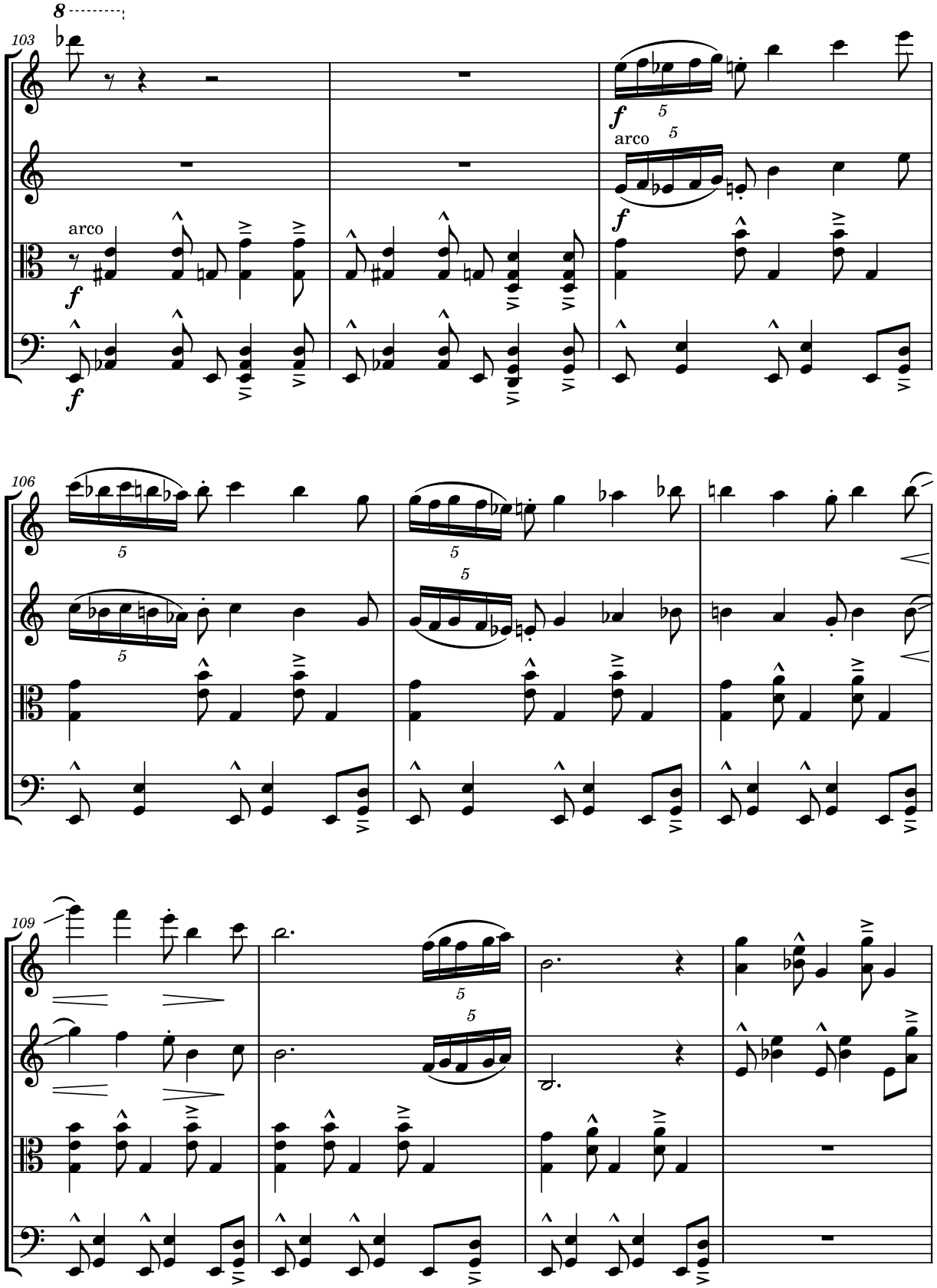

46
pp
pp
arco
p
50
arco
f
pizz.
p
f
arco
f
pizz.
p
fp
f
55
arco
f
pizz.
mp
flautando
mp
arco
f
pizz.
mp
fp
f

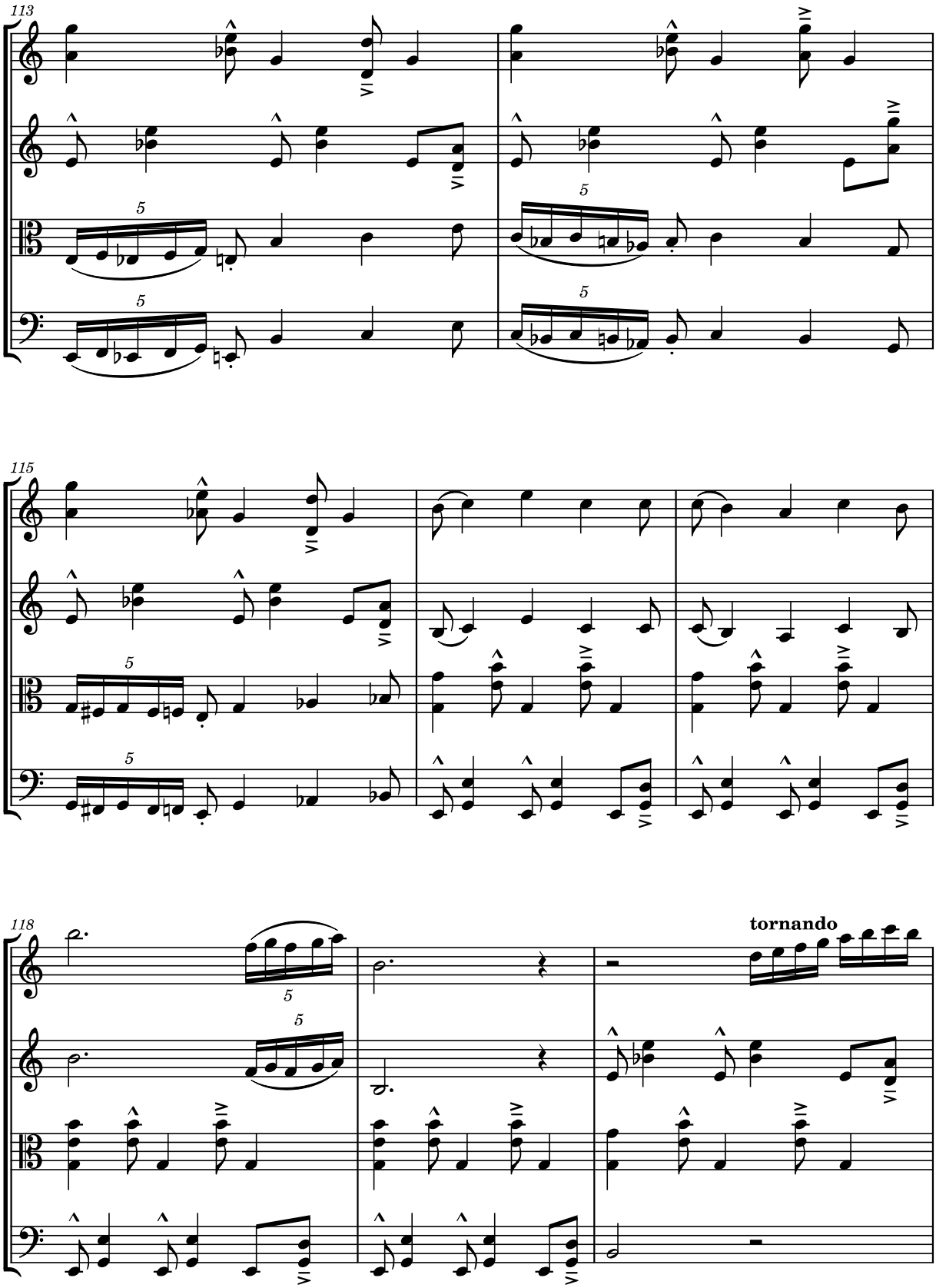

60
63
ord.
mp
67
set down bow

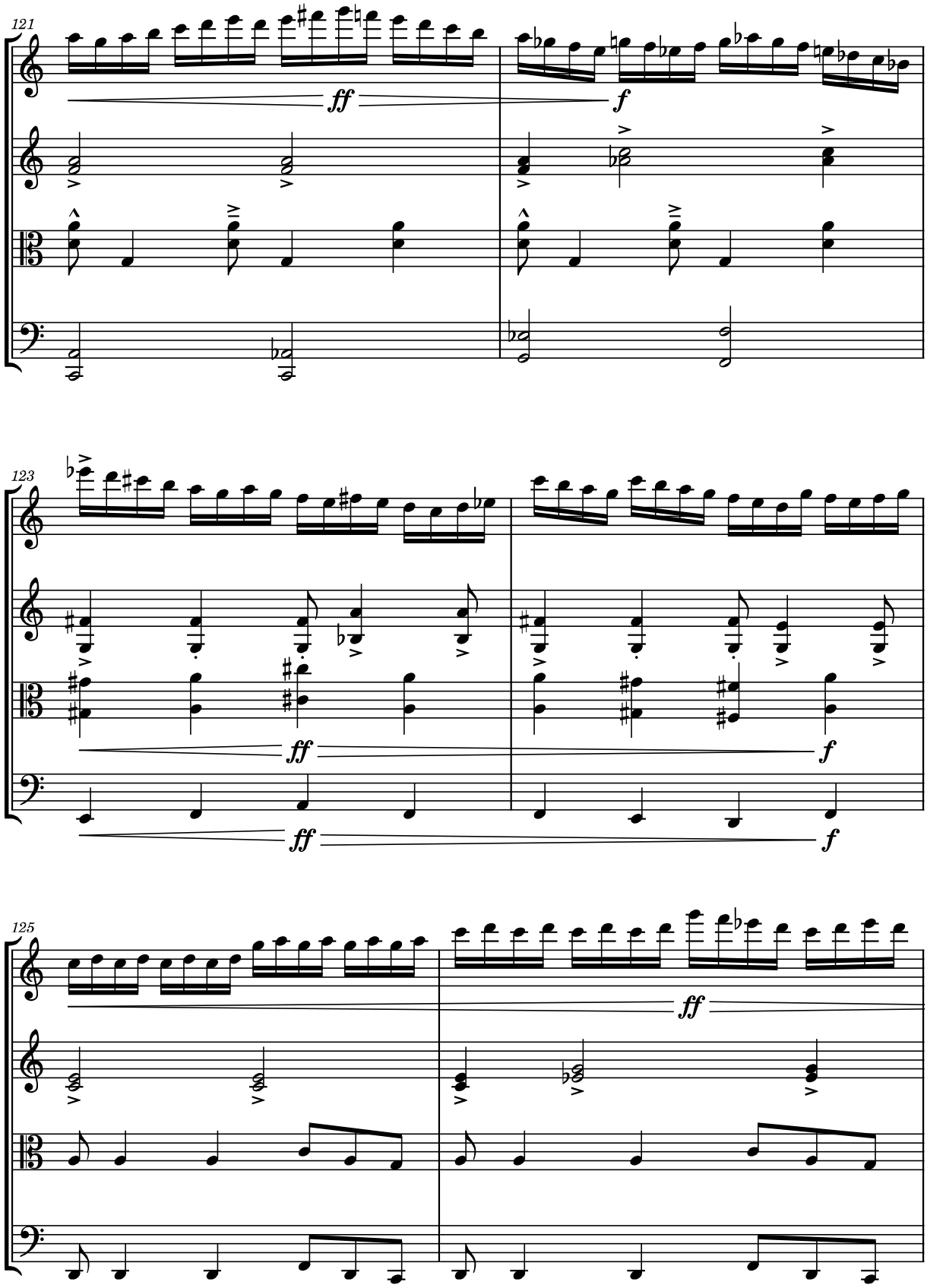

71
Faster. ♩ = 88.
arco
p
p
arco
mf
pizz.
mf
75
78
p
pp
p
pp
mf

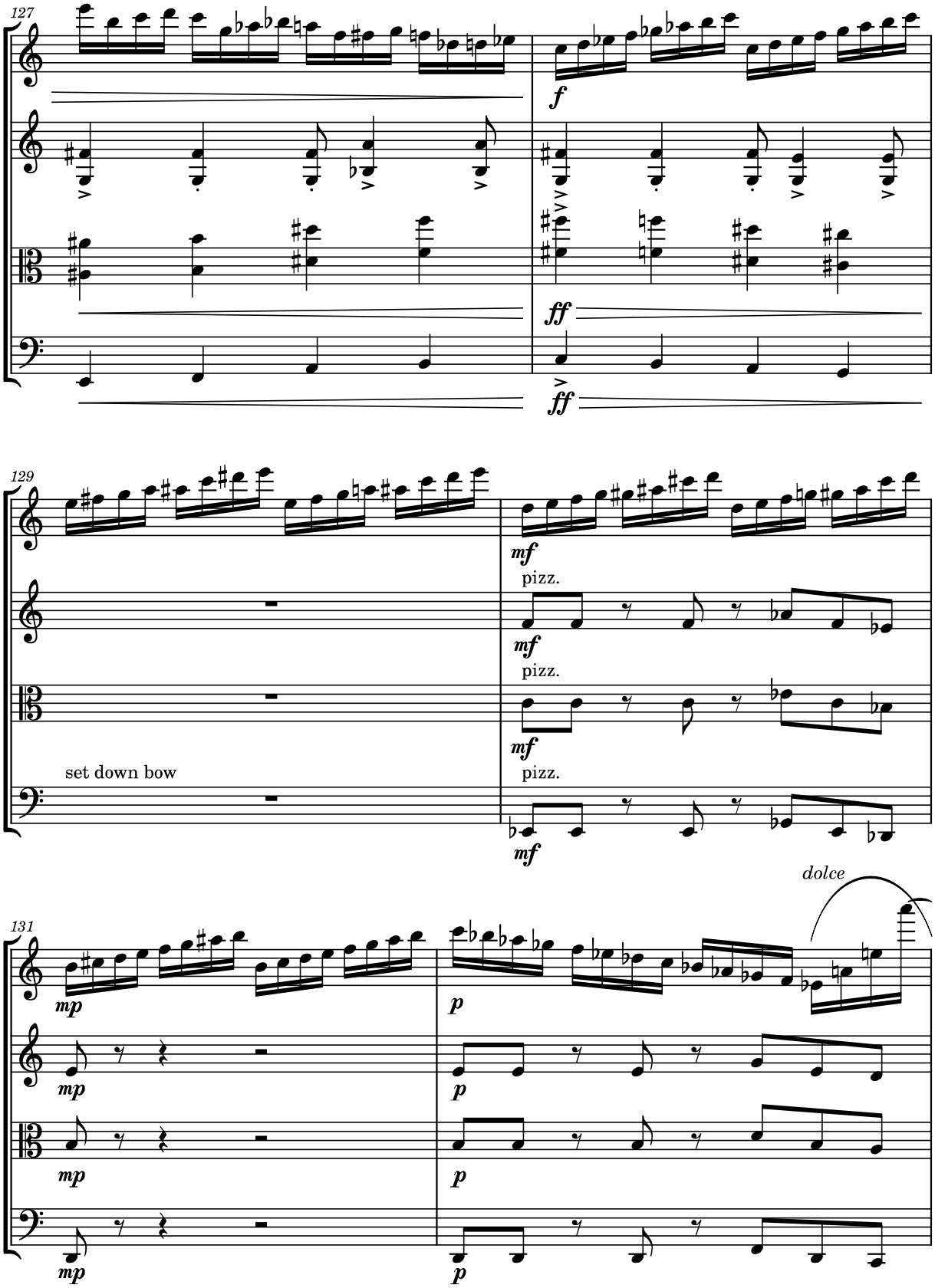

81
85
88
pick up bow

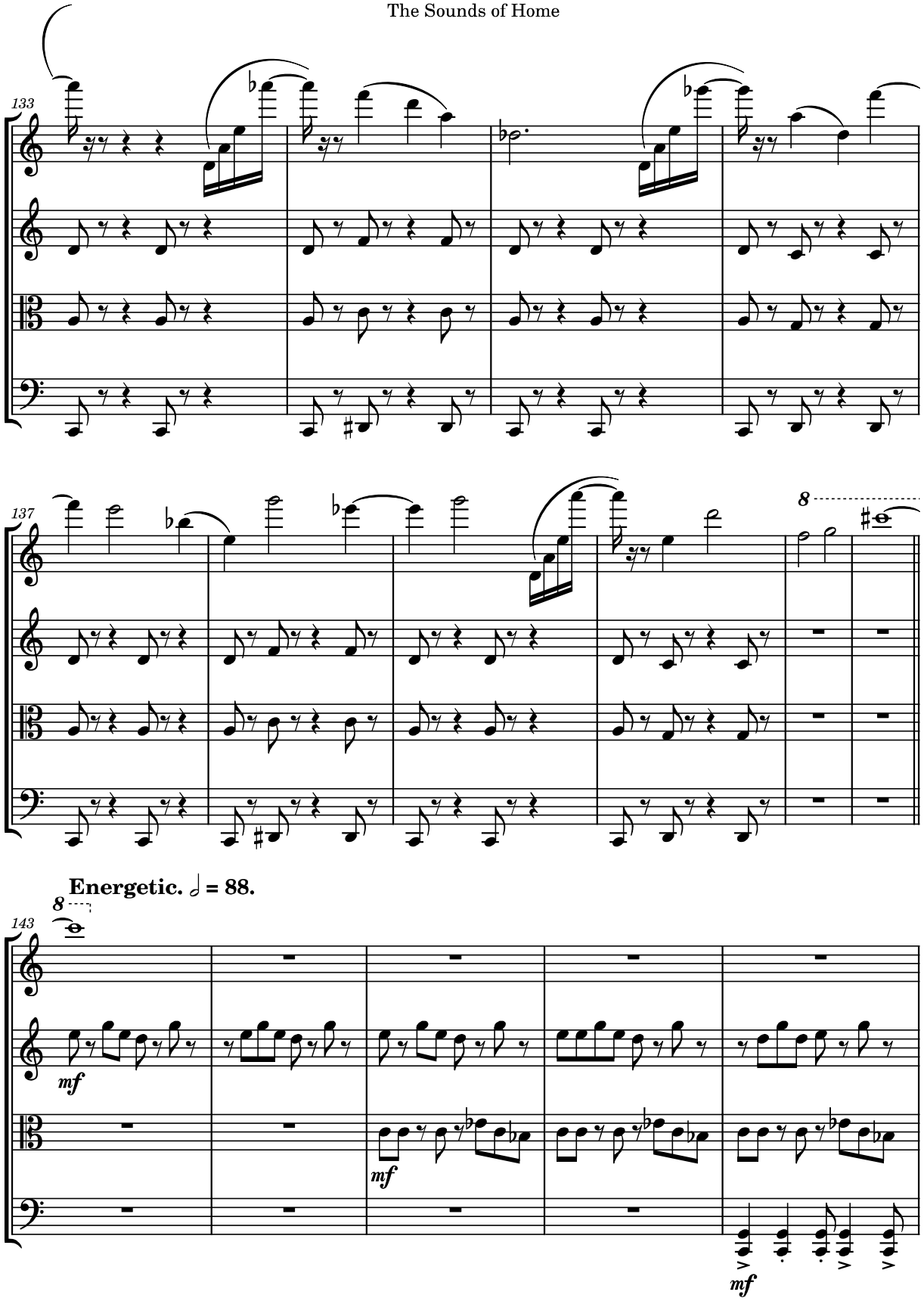

92
With force. ♩ = 144.
arco
fp
f
p
arco
97
3
100
pizz.
pp
arco
8

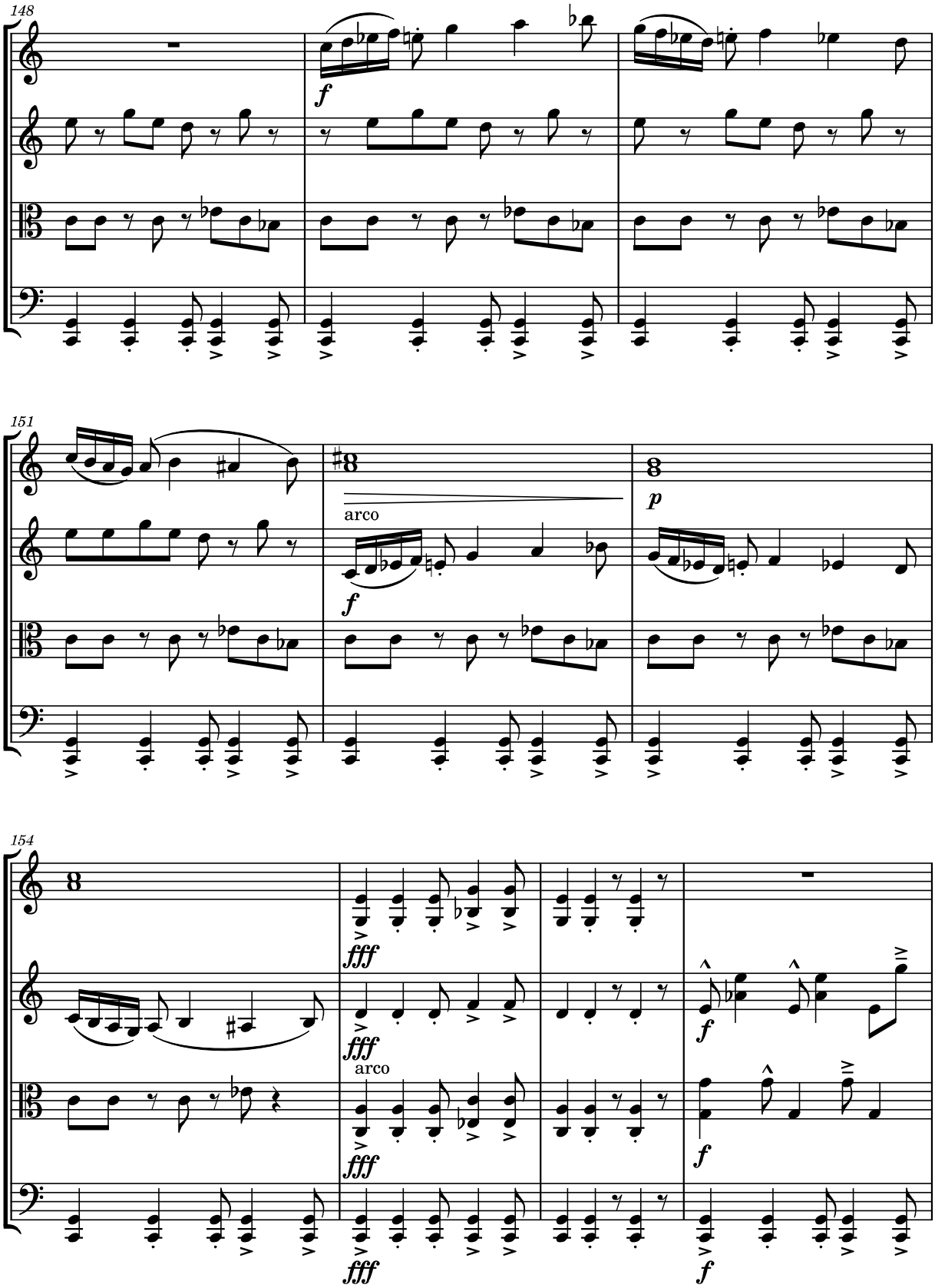

8
103
arco
f
5
arco
106
109

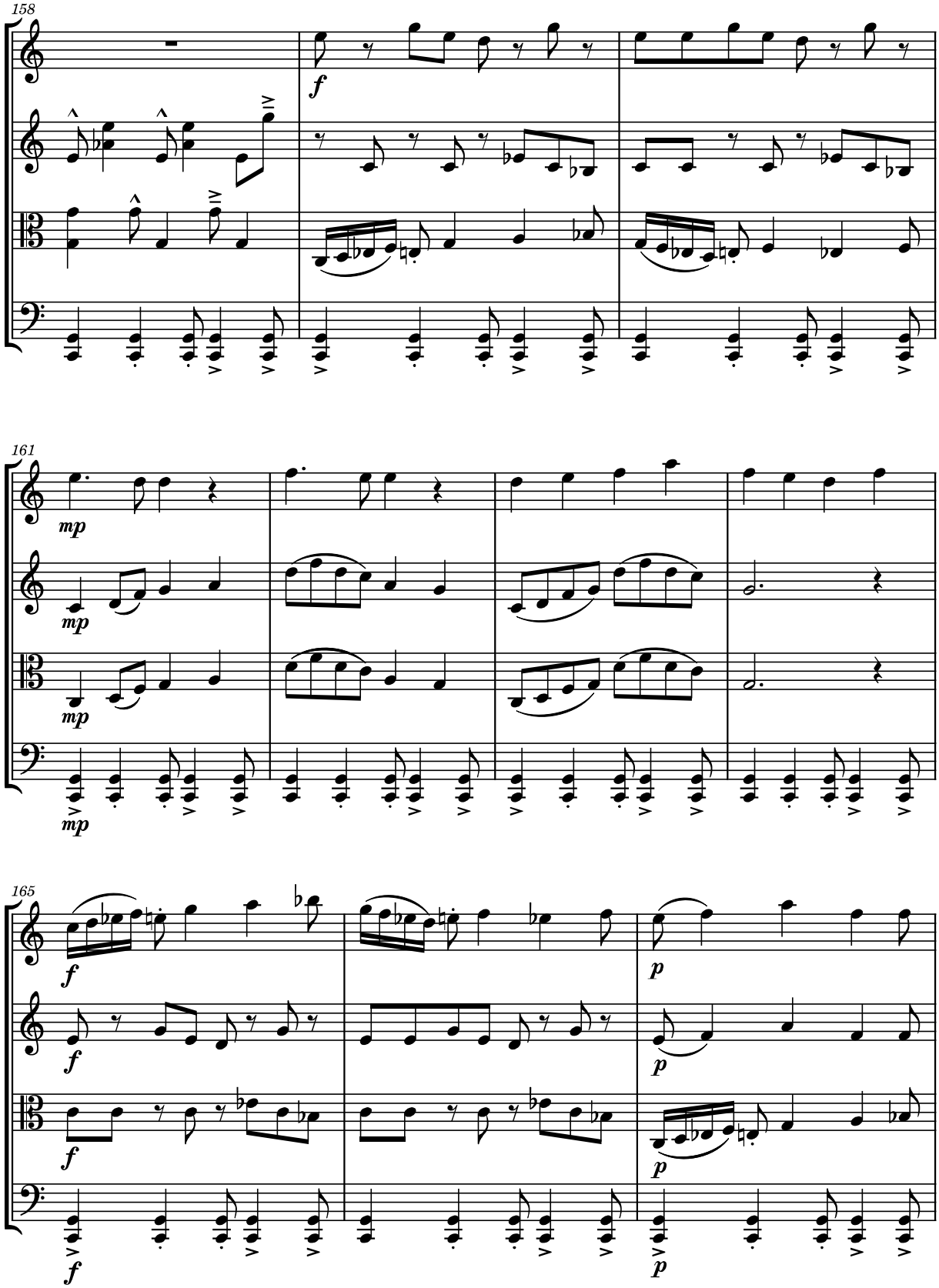

113
115
118
tornando

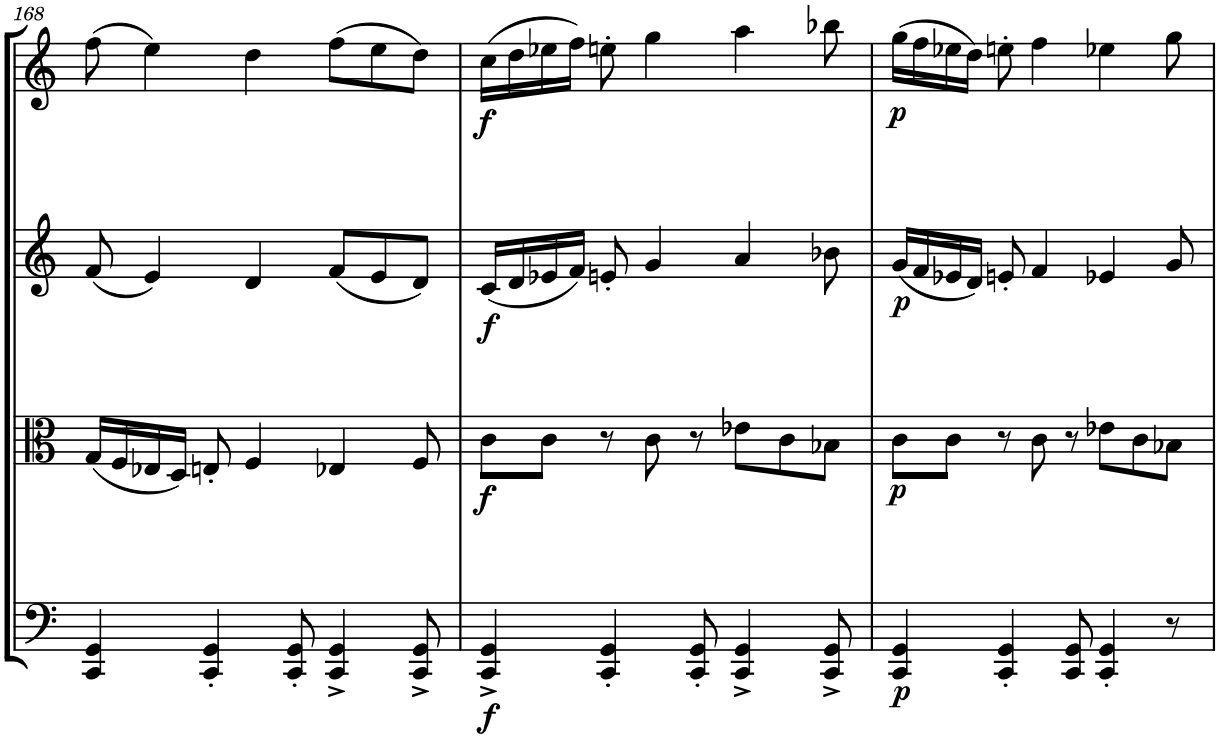

121
ff
f
123
ff
f
ff
f
125
ff

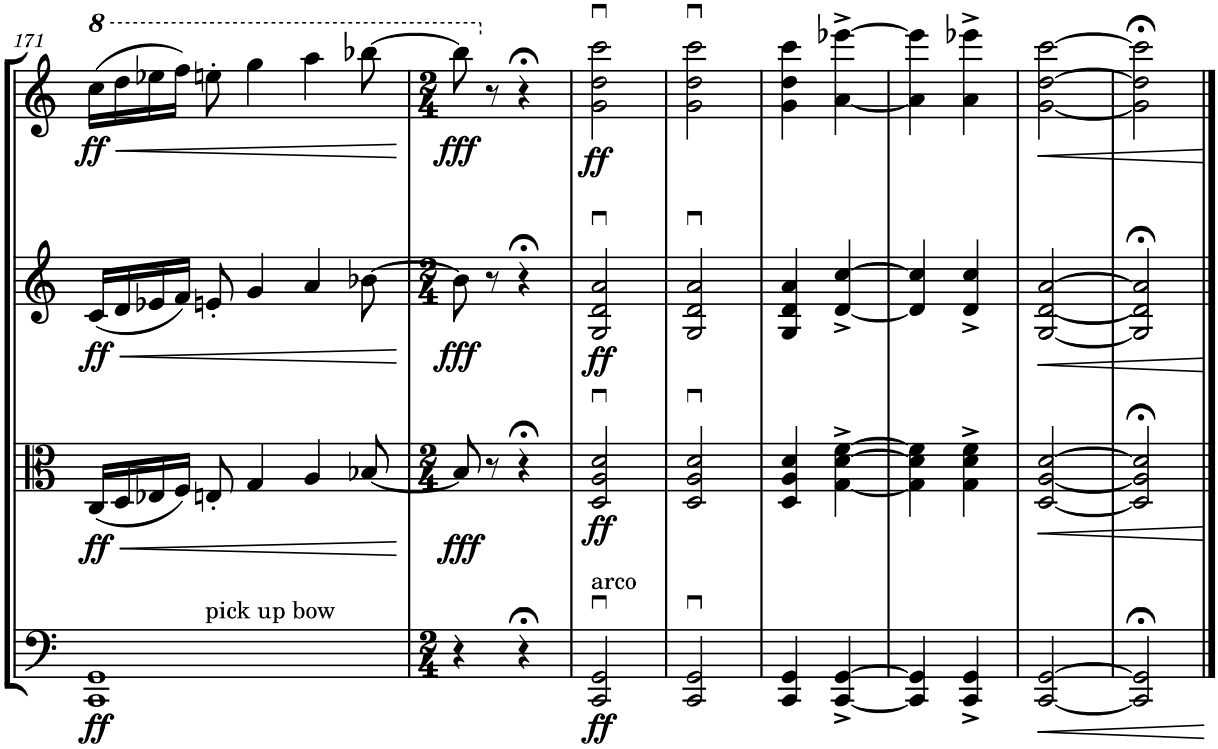

127
f
ff
ff
129
mf
pizz.
mf
pizz.
mf
pizz.
mf
set down bow
131
dolce
mp
mp
mp
mp
p
p
p
p


133
137
8
Energetic. 𝅗𝅥 = 88.
143
8
mf
mf
mf


148
f
151
arco
f
p
154
fff
fff
arco
fff
f
f
f


158
f
161
mp
mp
mp
165
f
f
f
f
p
p
p


168
f
p


171
8
ff
fff
pick up bow
arco

Paul Gabriel L. Cosme

Commuting in Manila

For Wind Septet

Program Notes

Commuting in Manila emulates the commuting experience in my hometown from the viewpoint of a working-class Filipino. Bereft of any personal cars, many Filipinos travel for hours amid the congested capital and fight through the impossible traffic and its cacophony. This piece aims to represent the ebbs and flows—the stresses of immobility and small joys of momentary relief—in the daily commute in Manila. In some ways, it is my own reflection on how I commute in Manila, going to school and work.

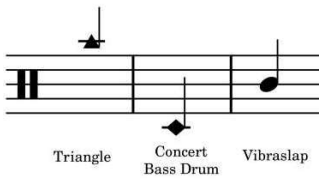
– Paul Gabriel L. Cosme

Instrumentation

Flute
Oboe
Bb Clarinet
Bassoon
Bb Trumpet
Percussion 1 (Marimba, Vibraphone, Triangle, Vibraslap)
Percussion 2 (Marimba, F B and C Crotales, Triangle, Concert Bass Drum, Vibraslap)

Note: A single marimba is shared between Perc. 1 and 2.

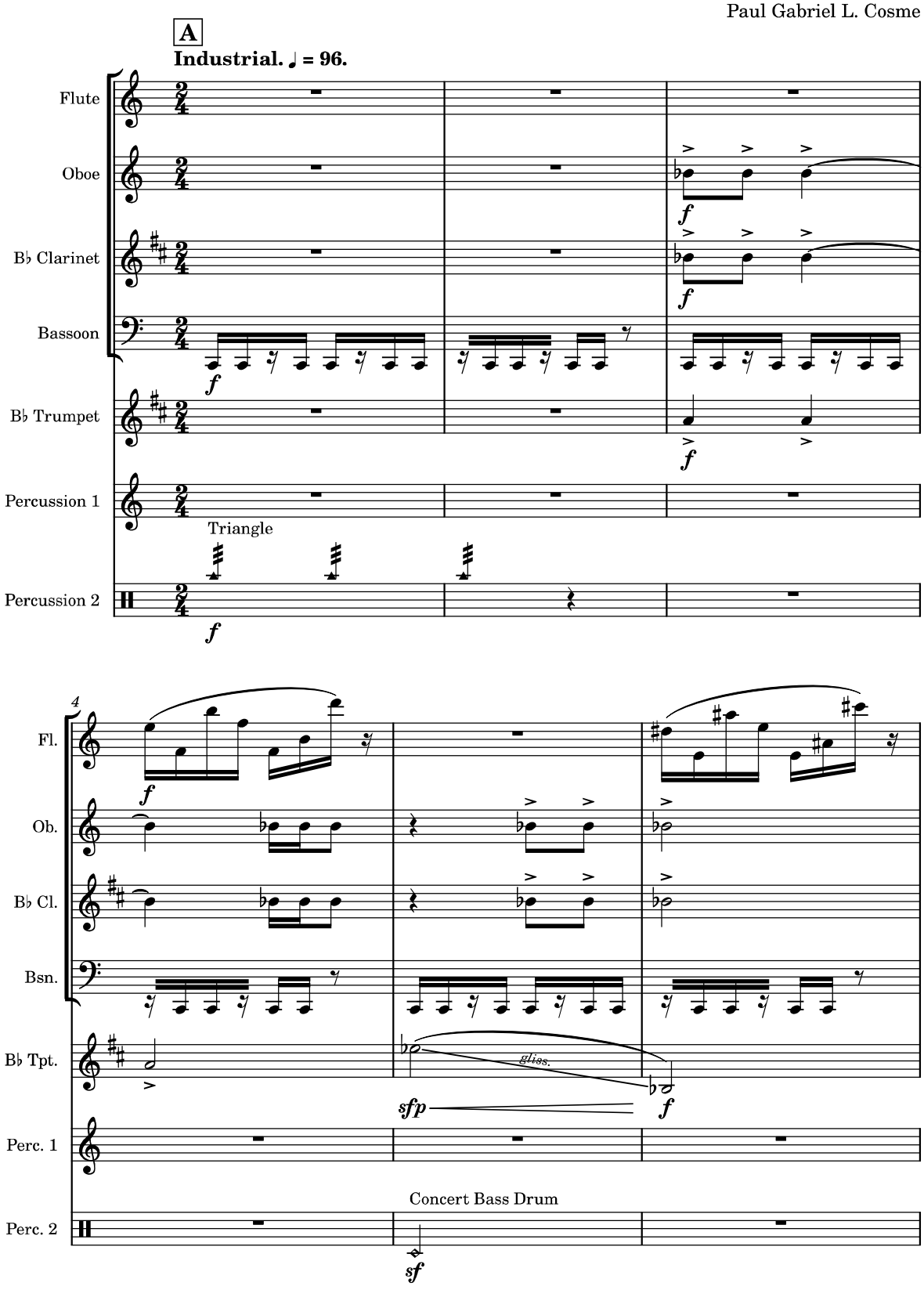
Percussion Notation



The percussion line for both Perc. 1 and 2 utilizes a five-lined staff. All unpitched percussions are notated as above and still follows traditional note values. Pitched percussions are played the same unless specified directly in the score. Moments when pitched and unpitched percussions are played together are also indicated in the score.

Commuting in Manila

Paul Gabriel L. Cosme



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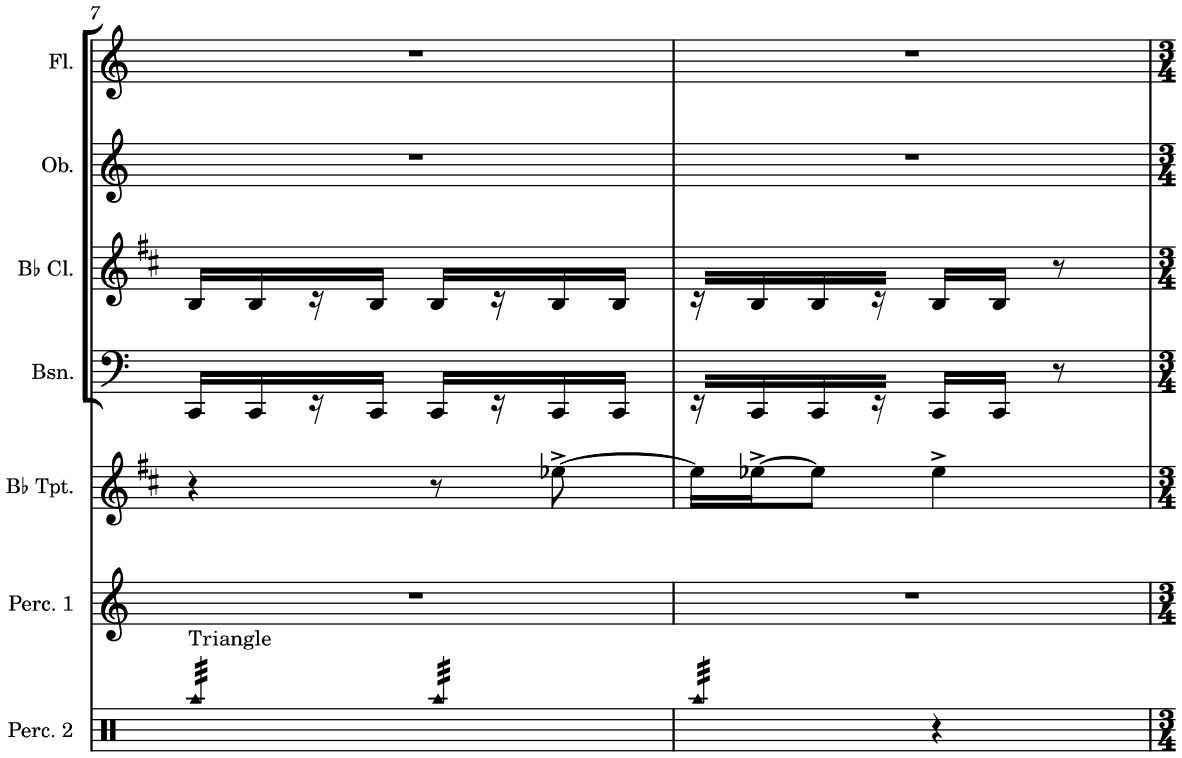
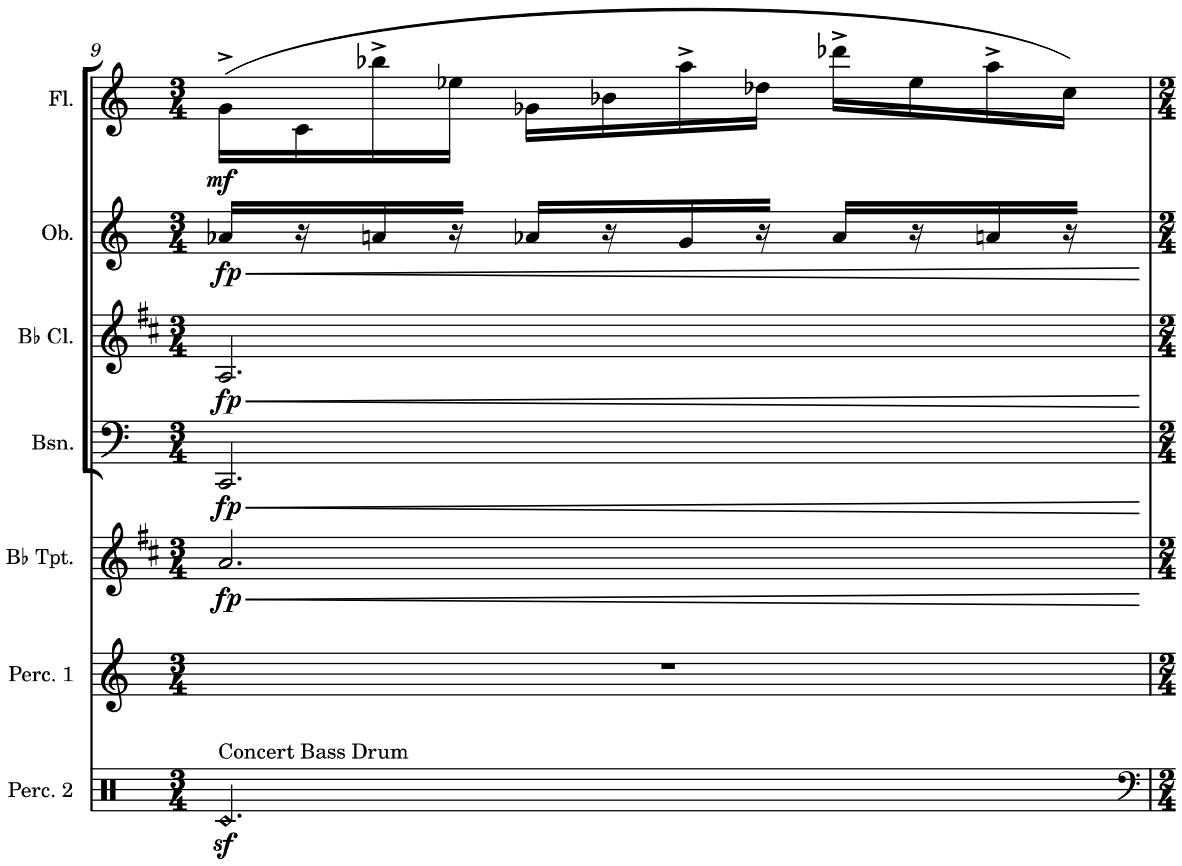
Commuting in Manila





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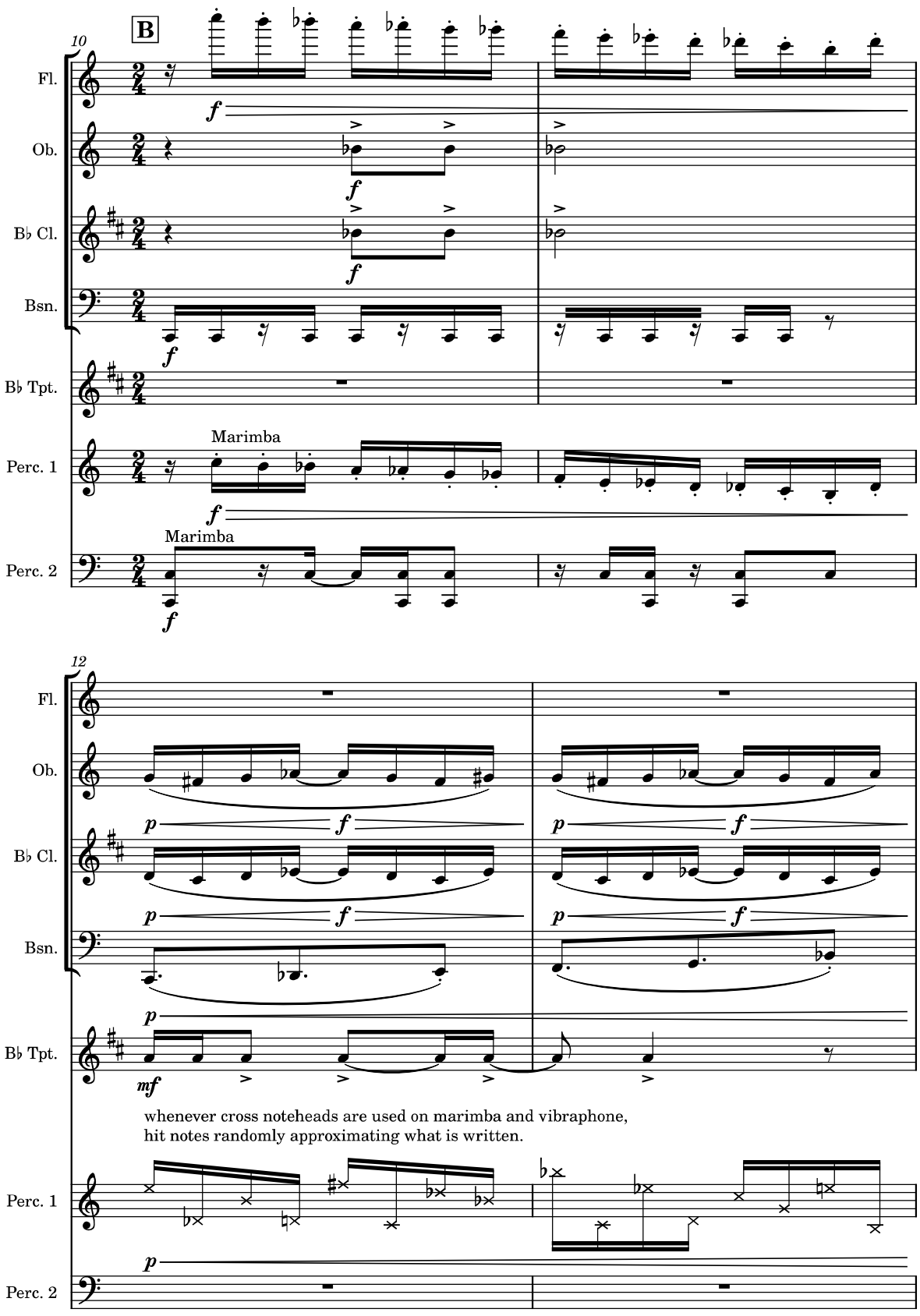

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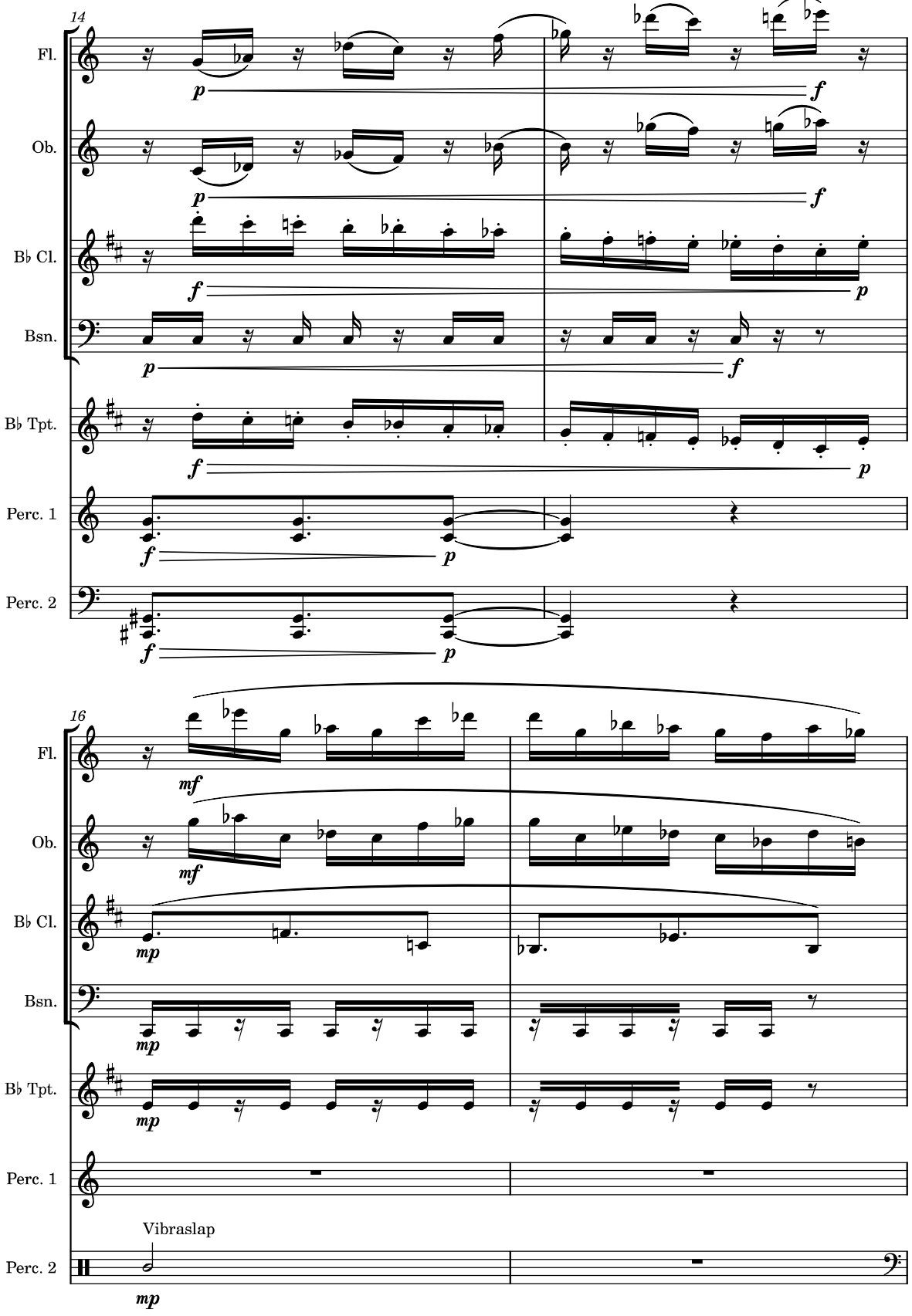
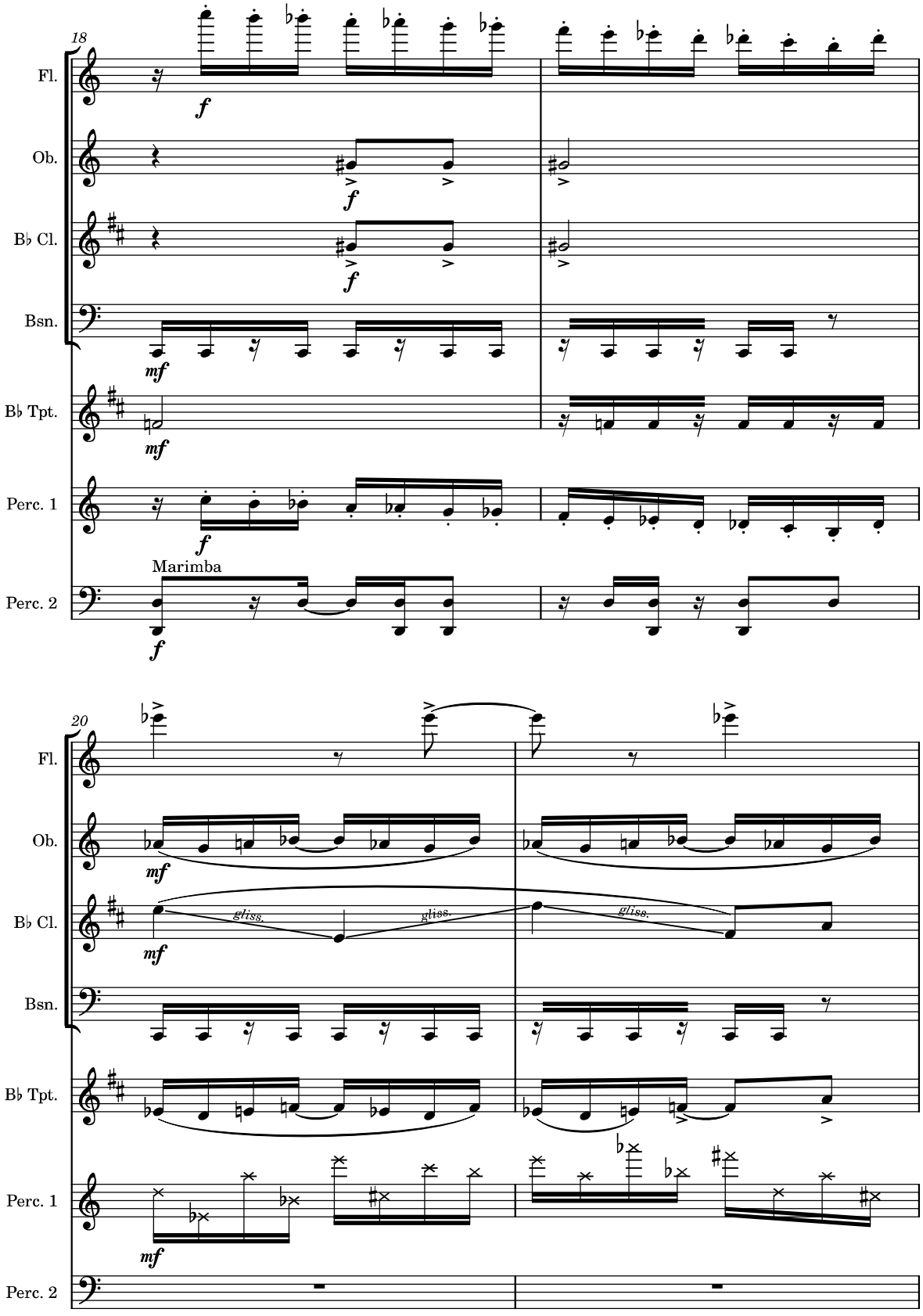
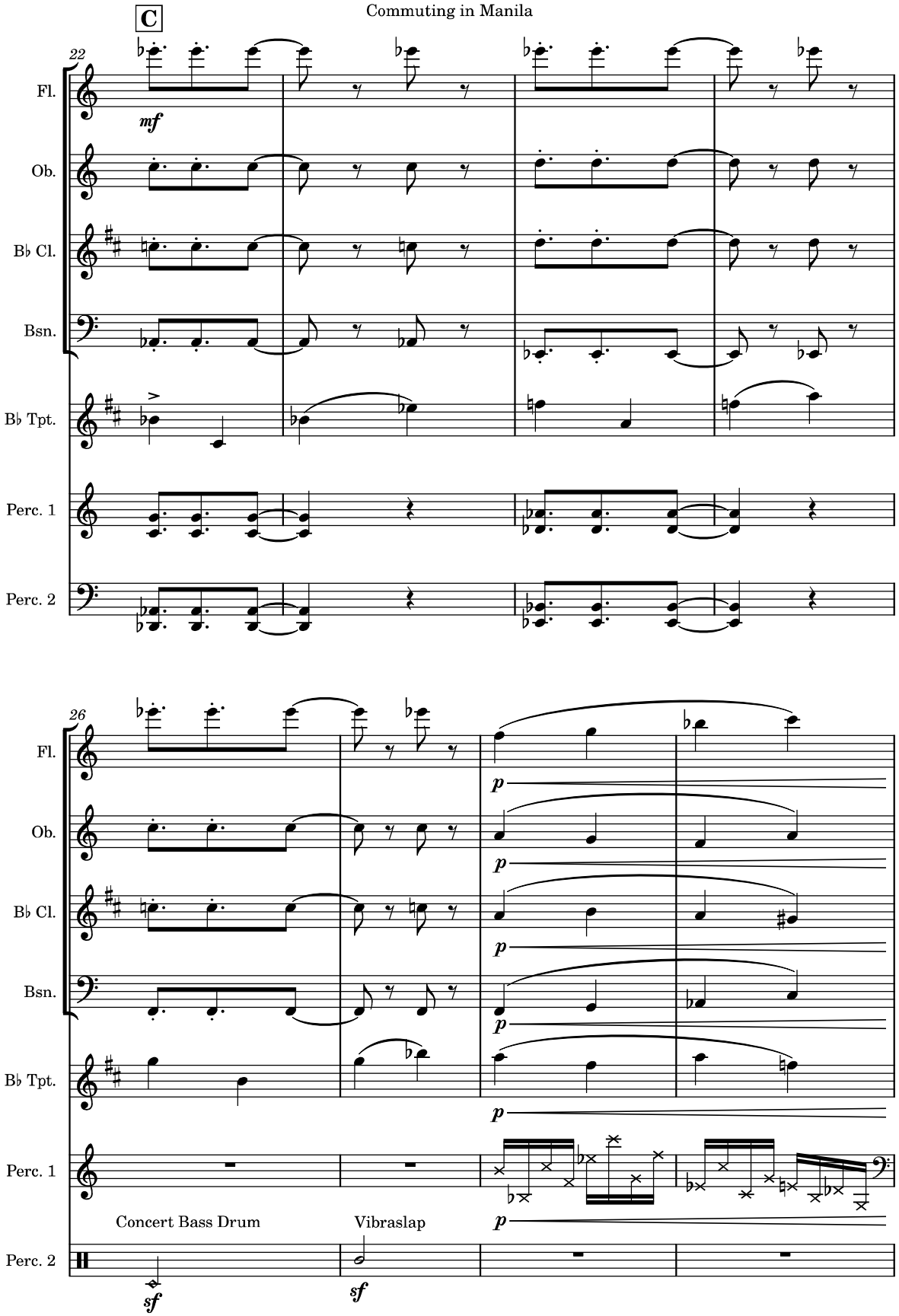
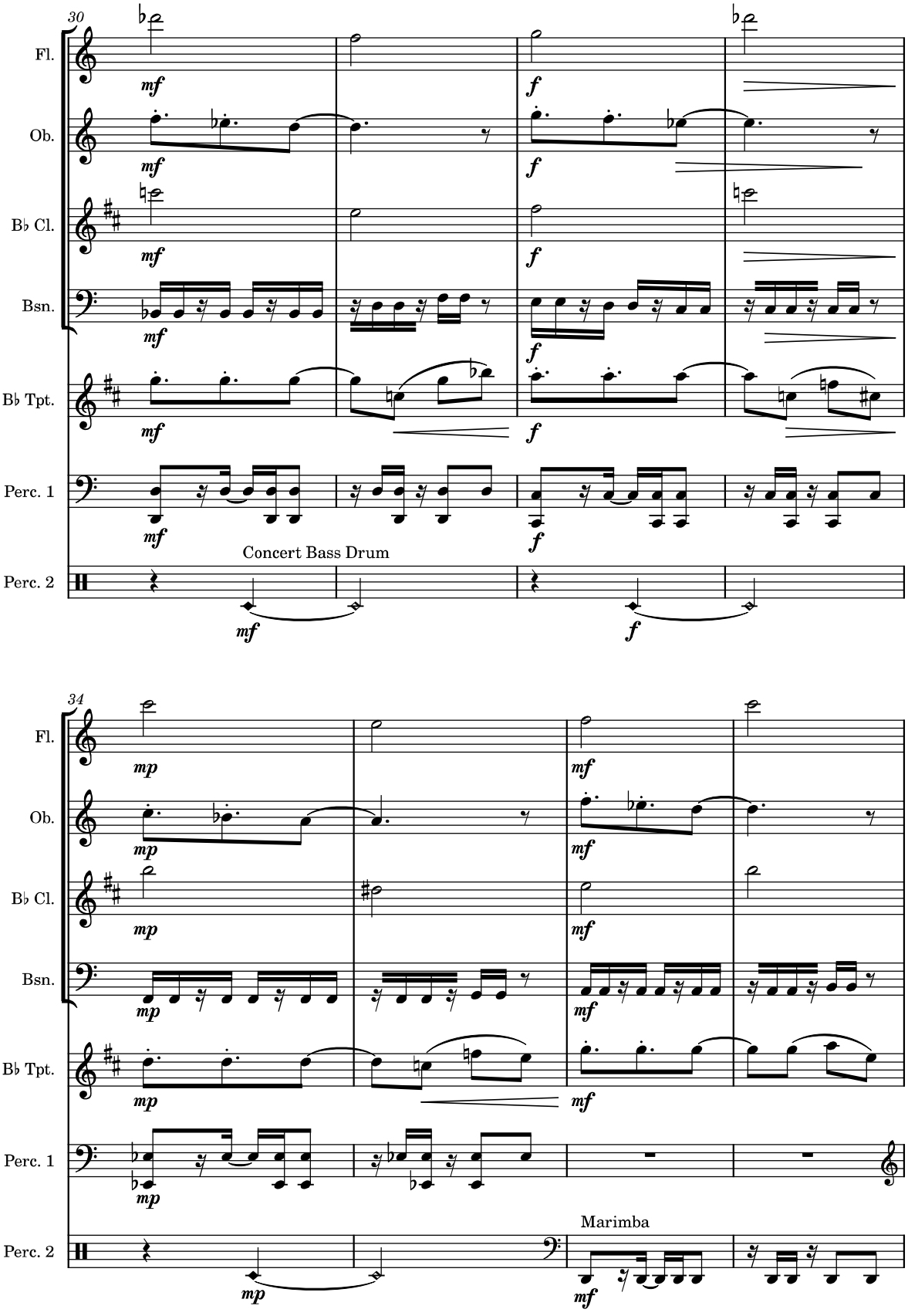


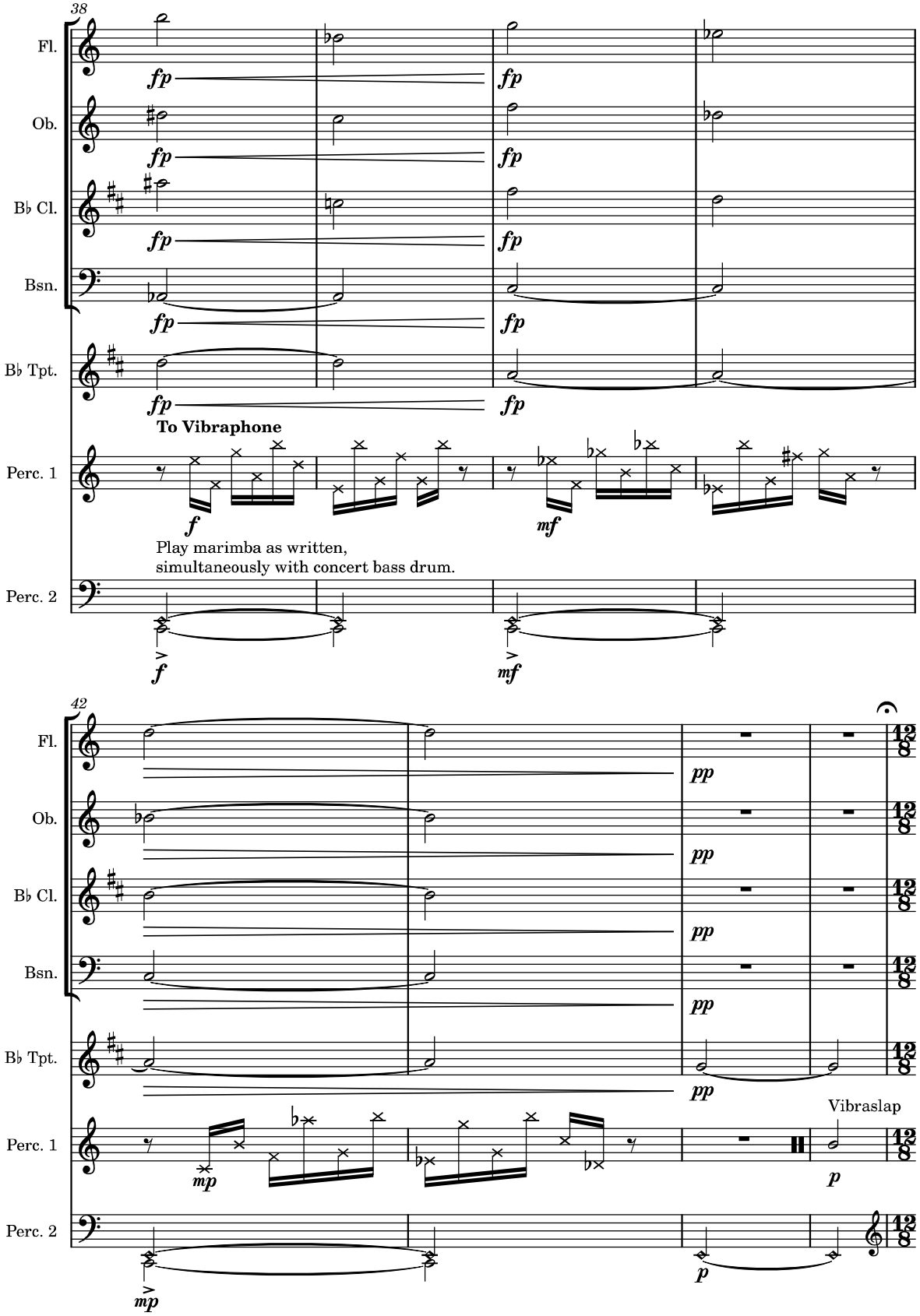

18
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
B♭ Tpt.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Marimba
f
mf
20
gliss.

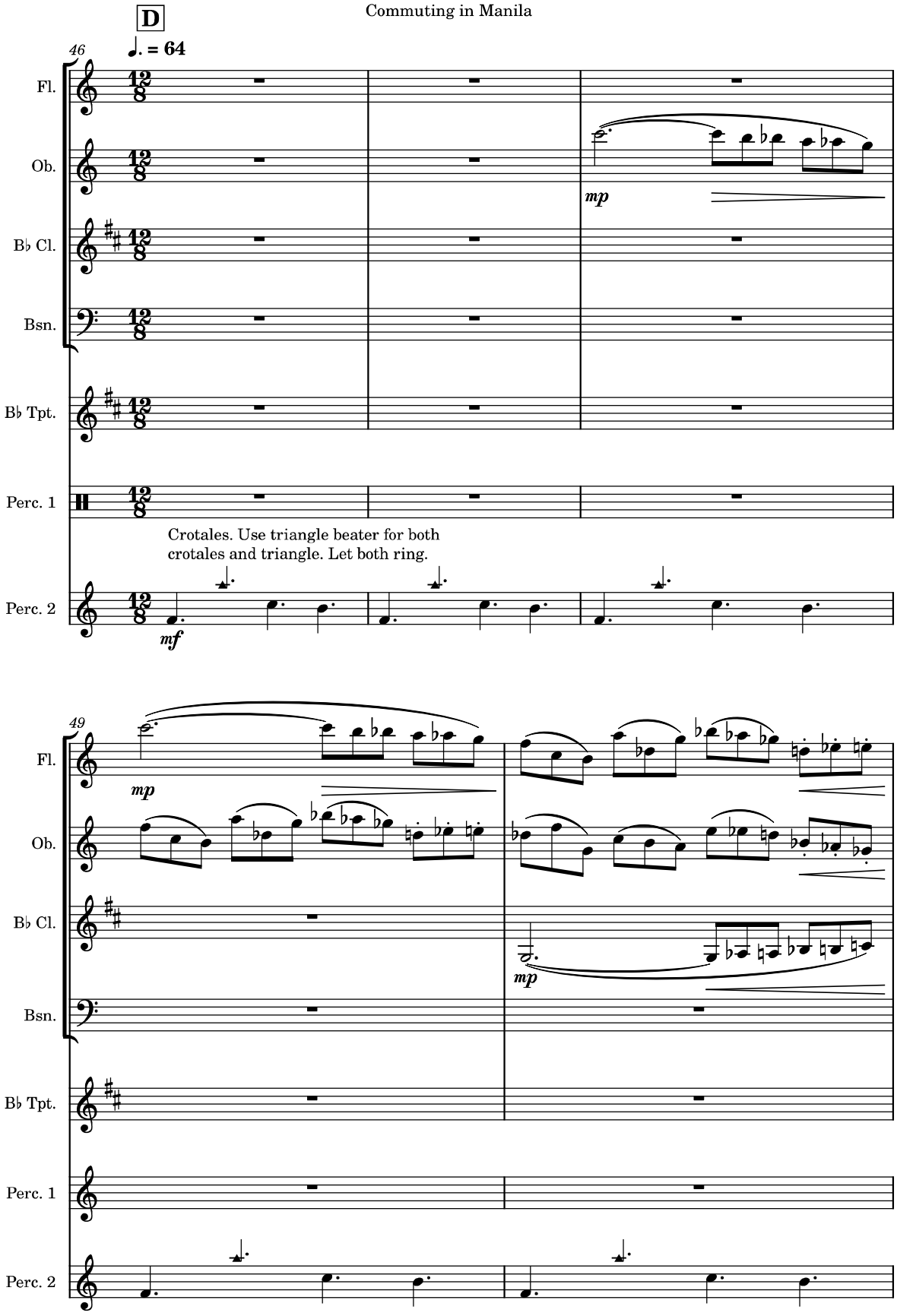

C
Commuting in Manila
22
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
B♭ Tpt.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
mf
26
p
Concert Bass Drum
Vibraslap
sf

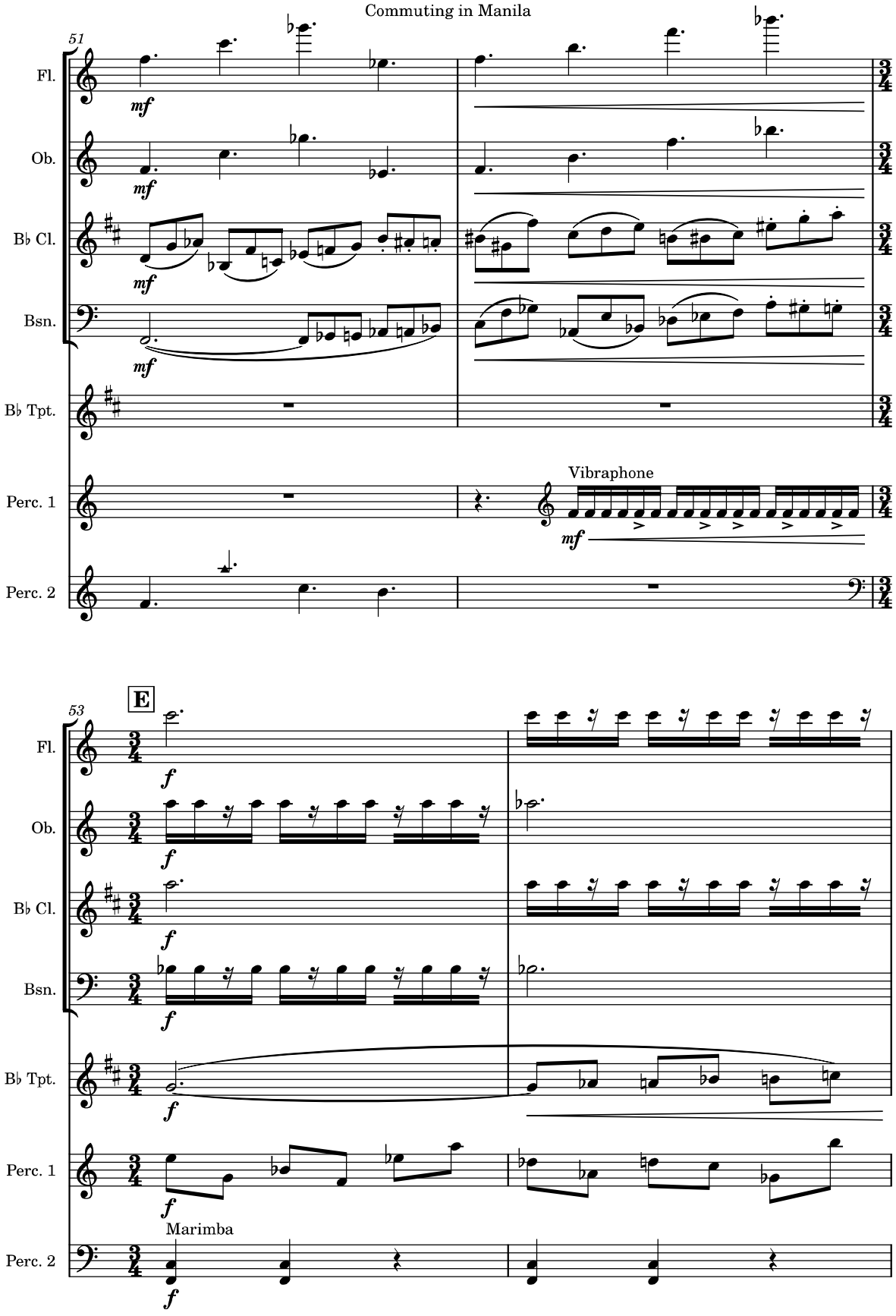
Commuting in Manila



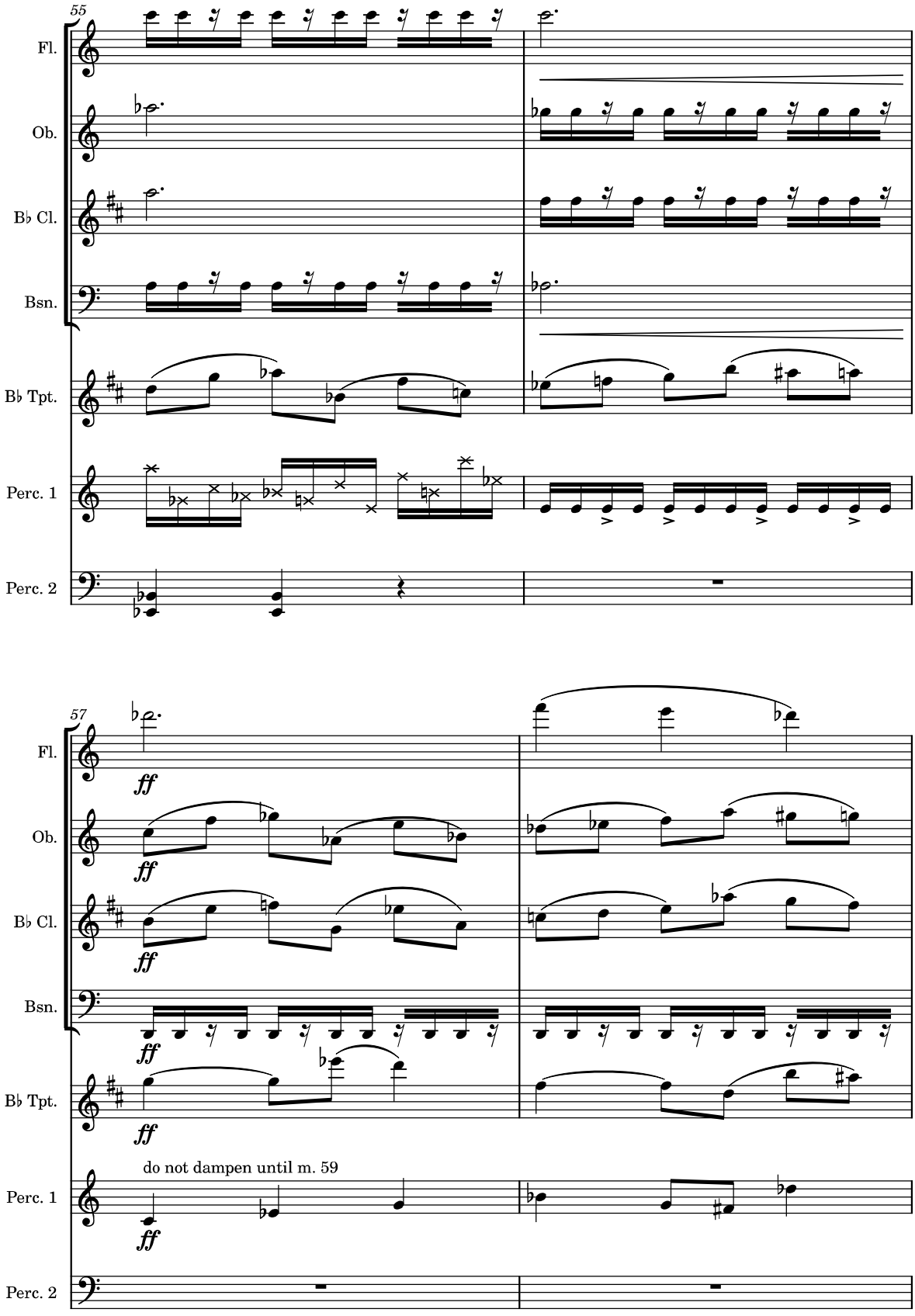
Commuting in Manila




D
♩. = 64
46
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
B♭ Tpt.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
mp
Crotales. Use triangle beater for both
crotales and triangle. Let both ring.
mf
49
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
B♭ Tpt.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
mp
mp


Commuting in Manila
51
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
B♭ Tpt.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
mf
Vibraphone
E
53
f
Marimba

Commuting in Manila



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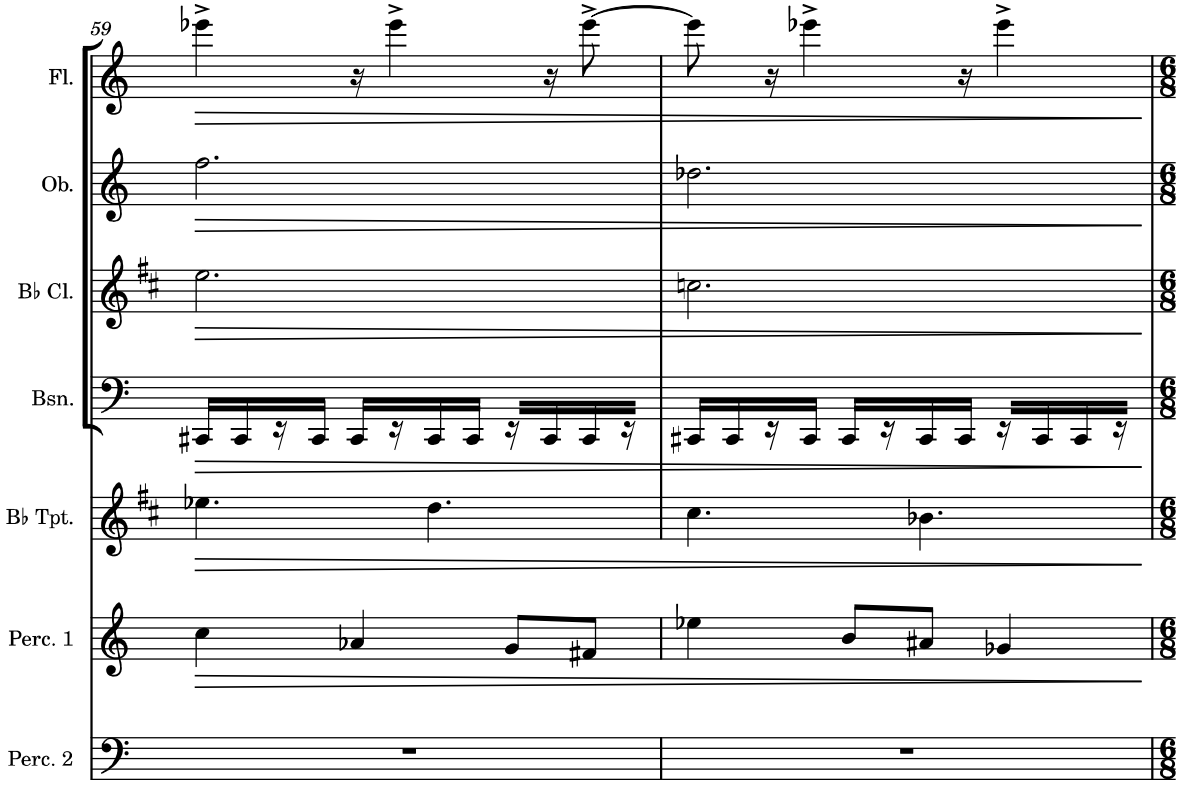

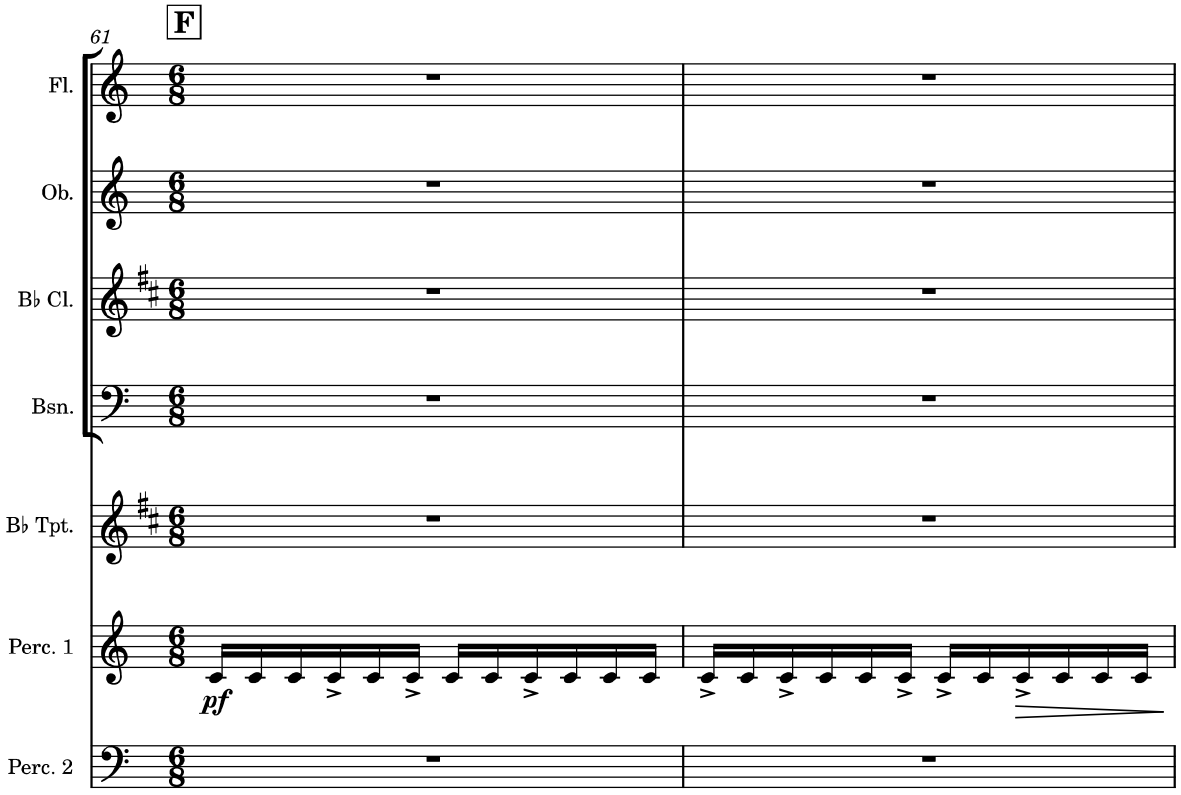

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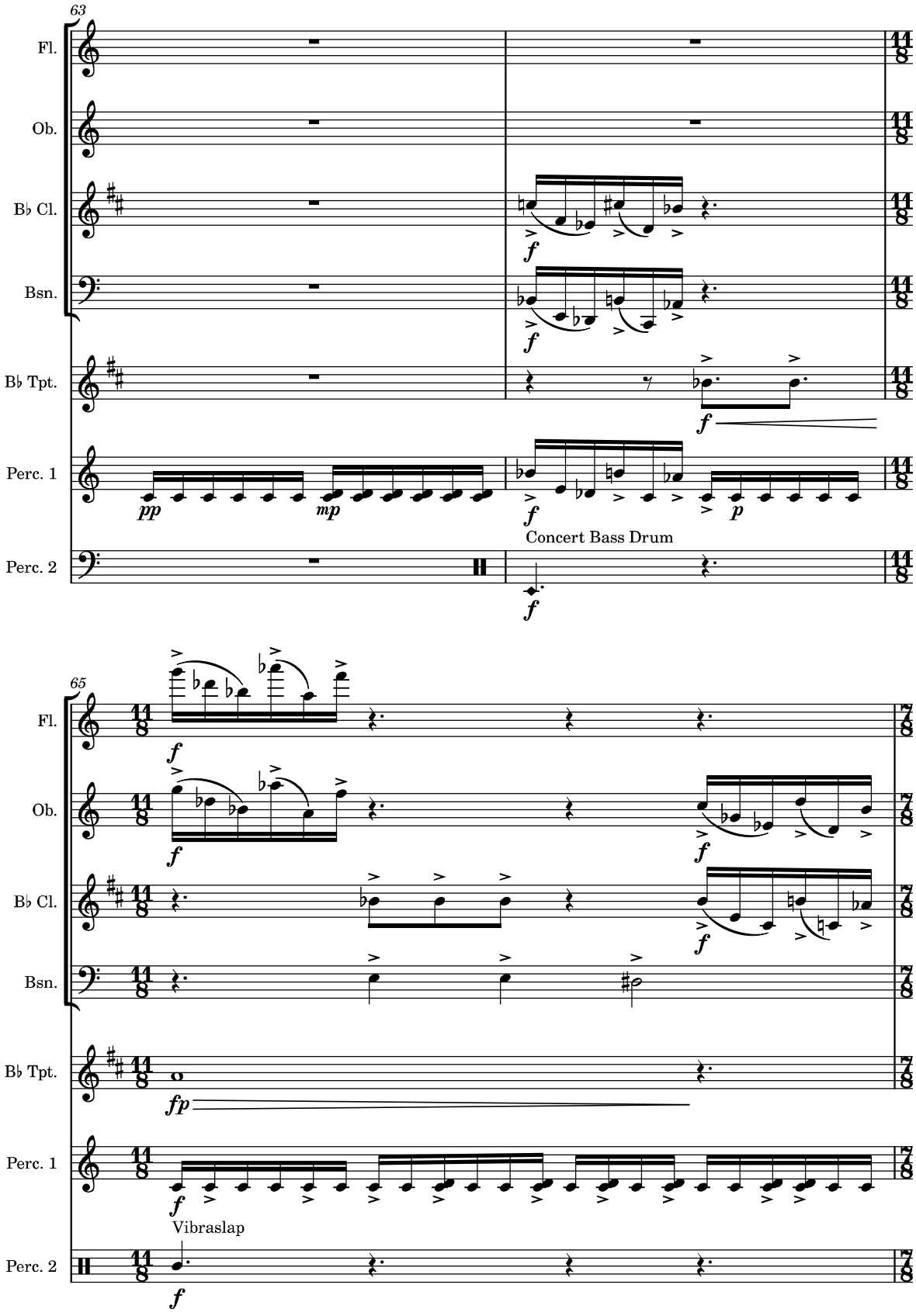
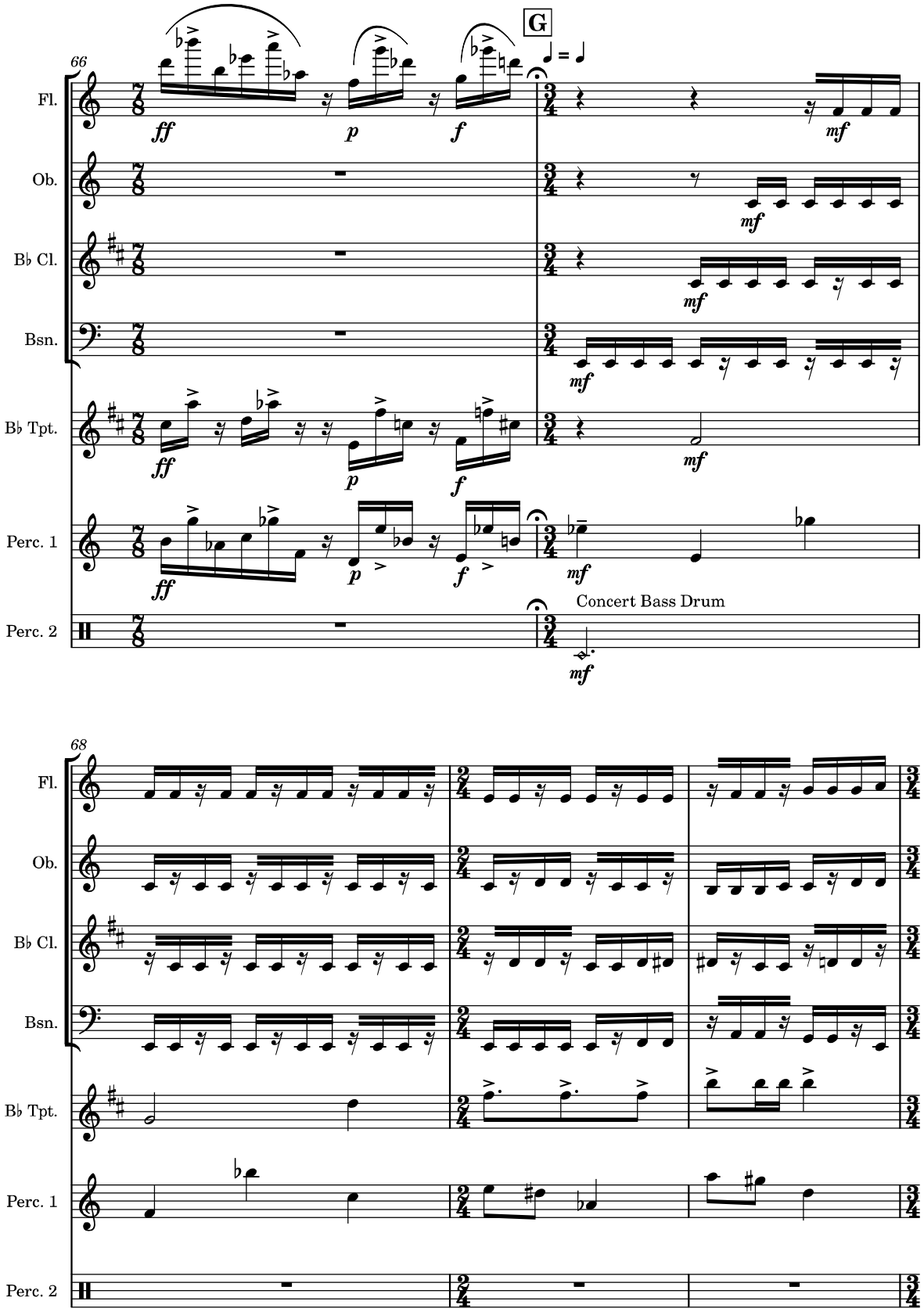
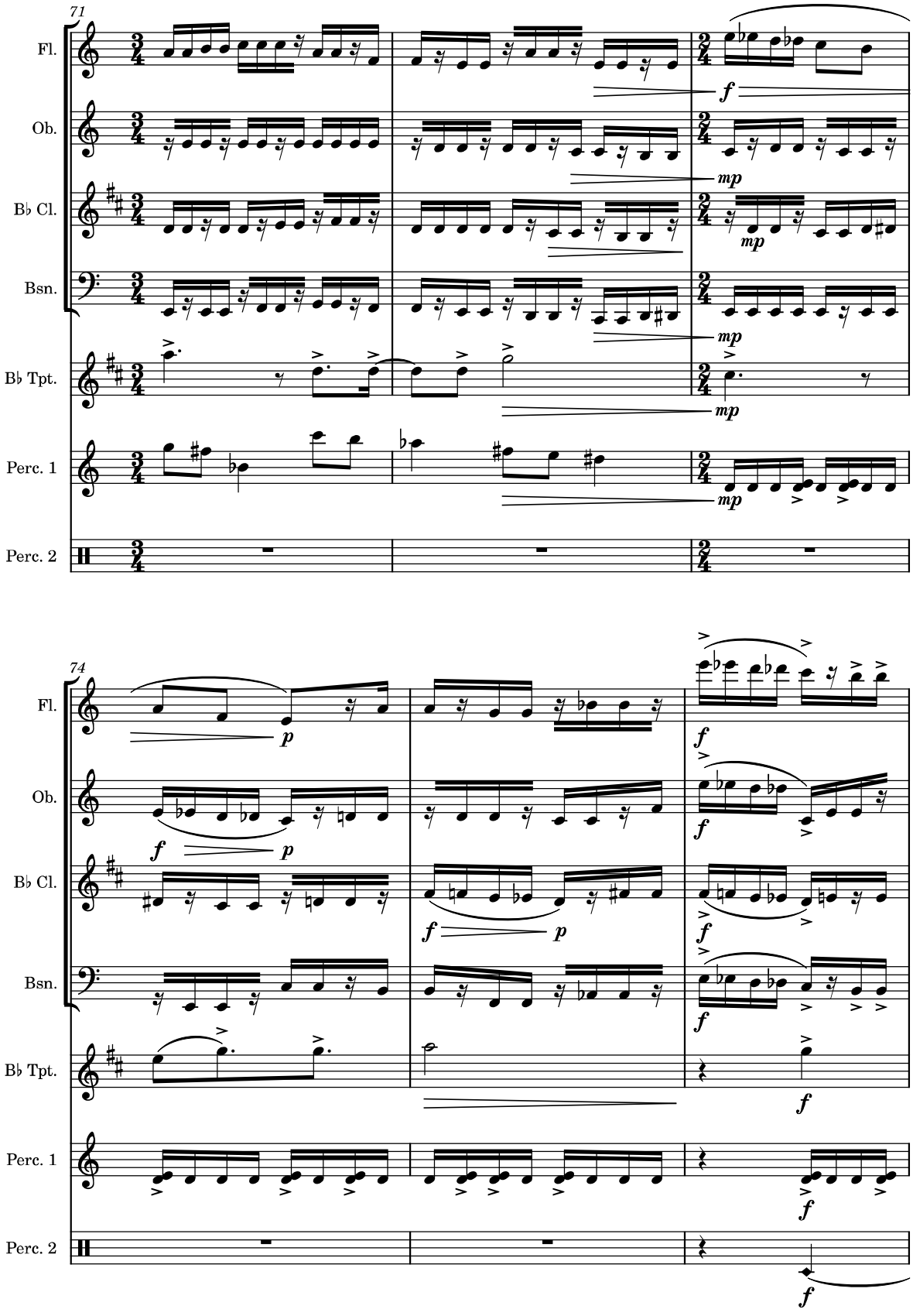



66
G
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
B♭ Tpt.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Concert Bass Drum
68

Commuting in Manila



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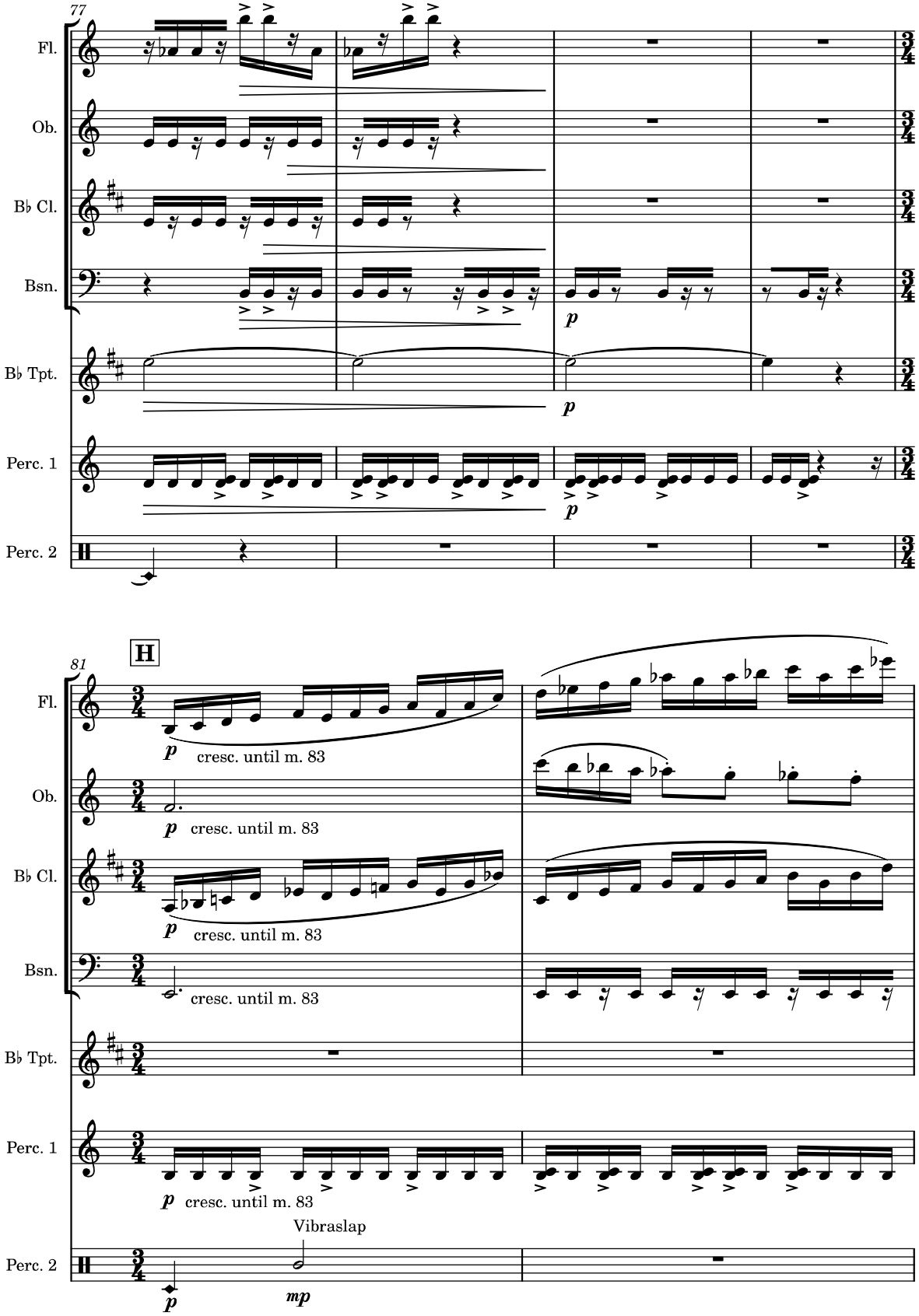
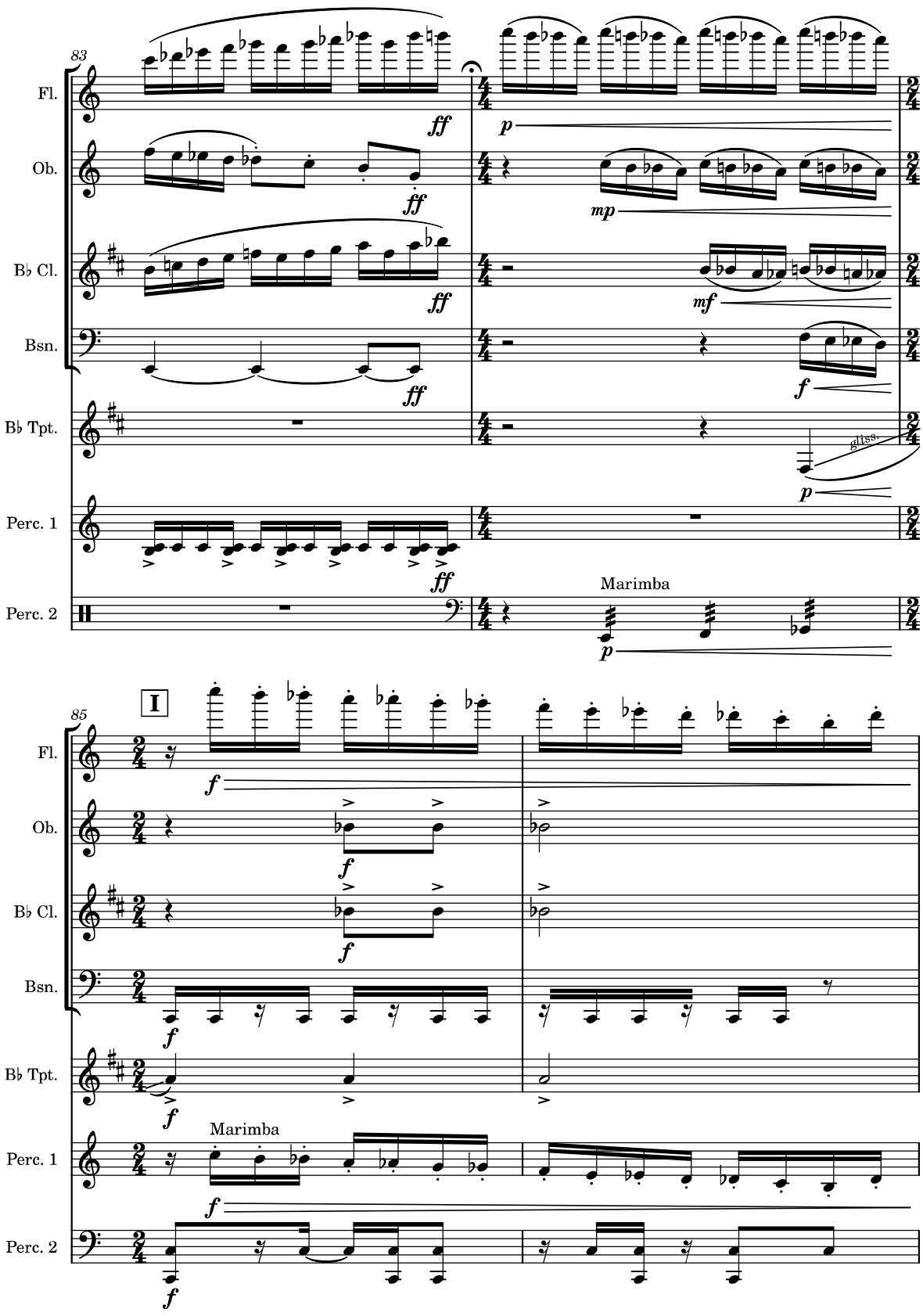
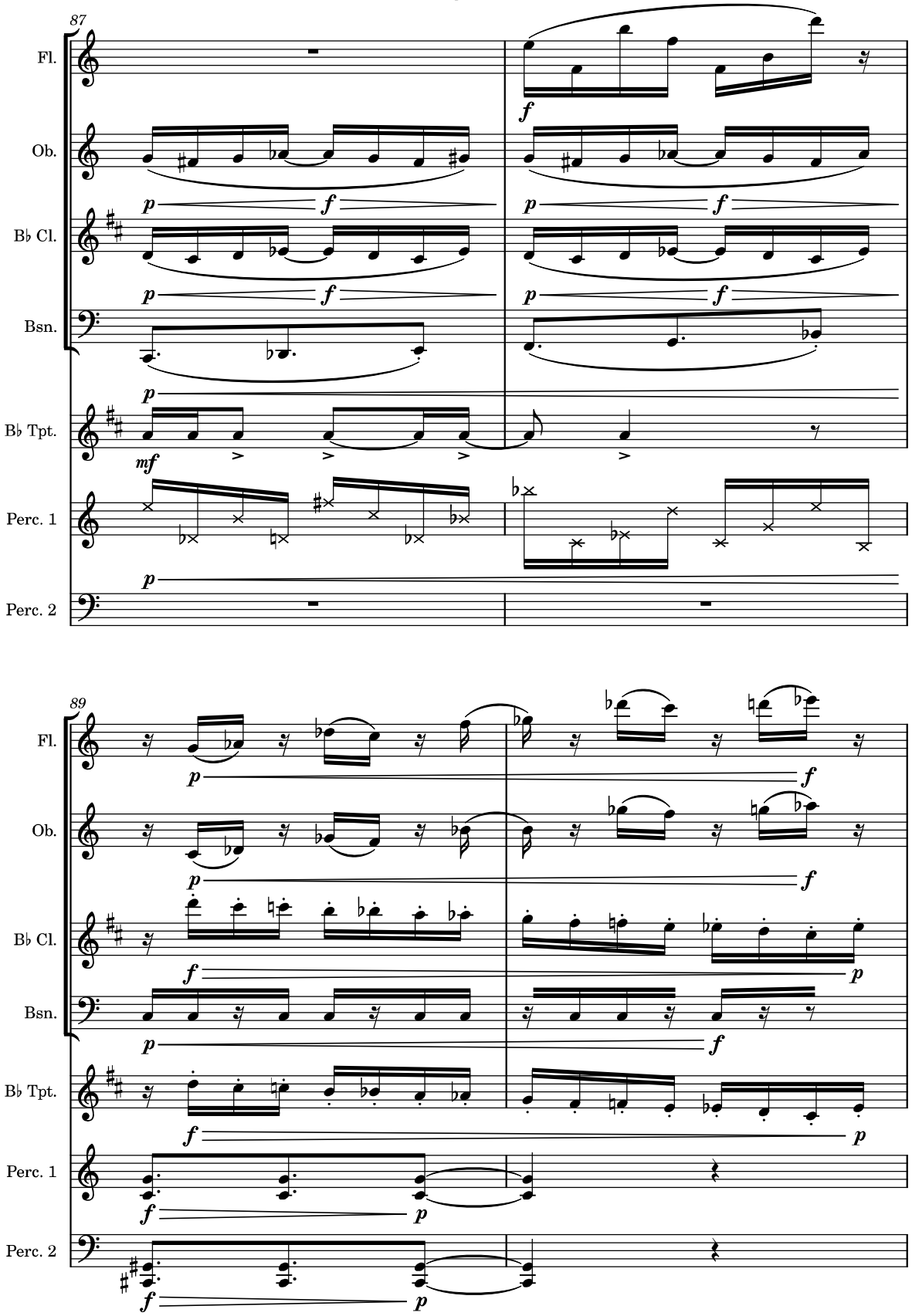
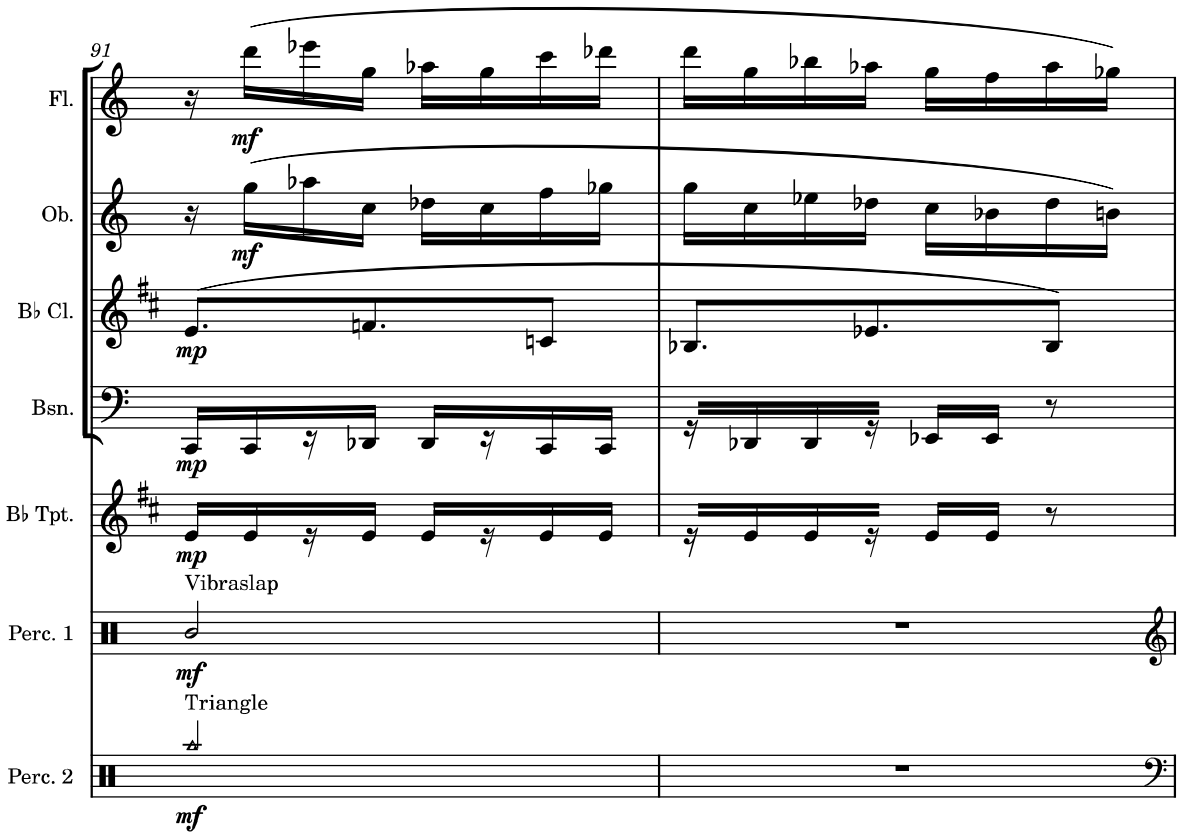
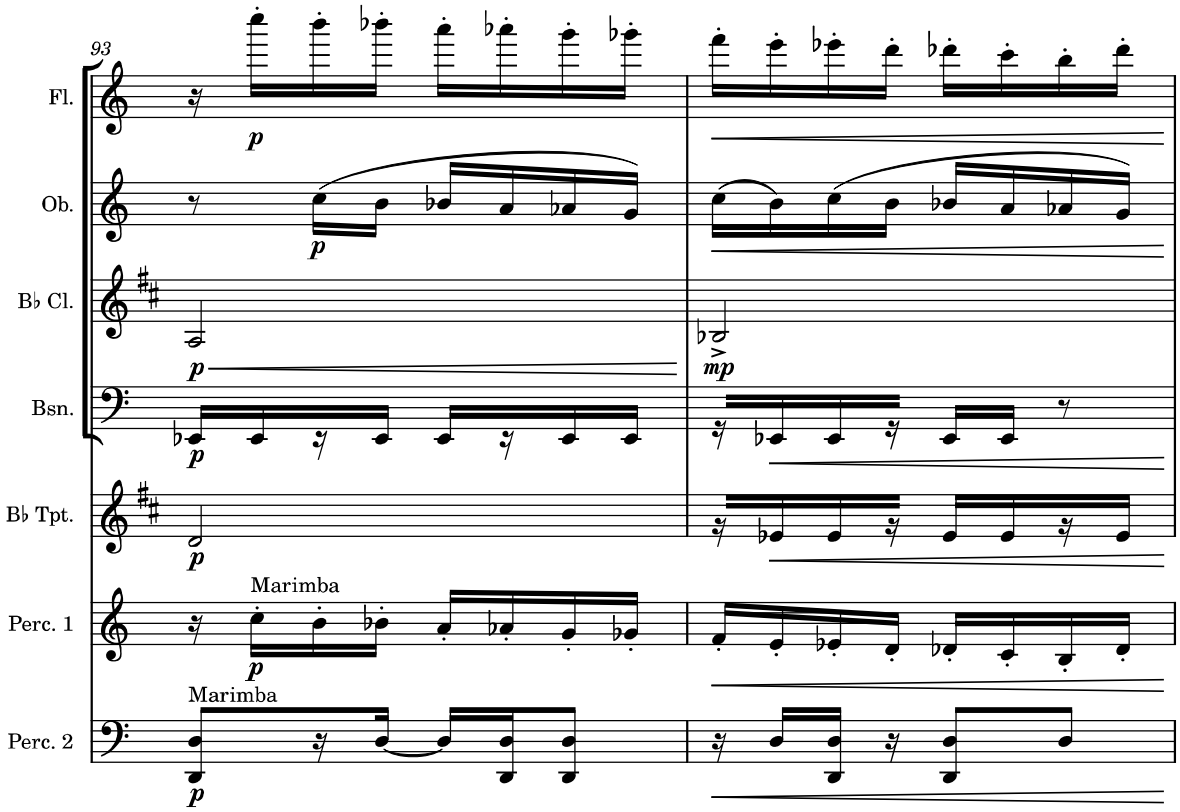


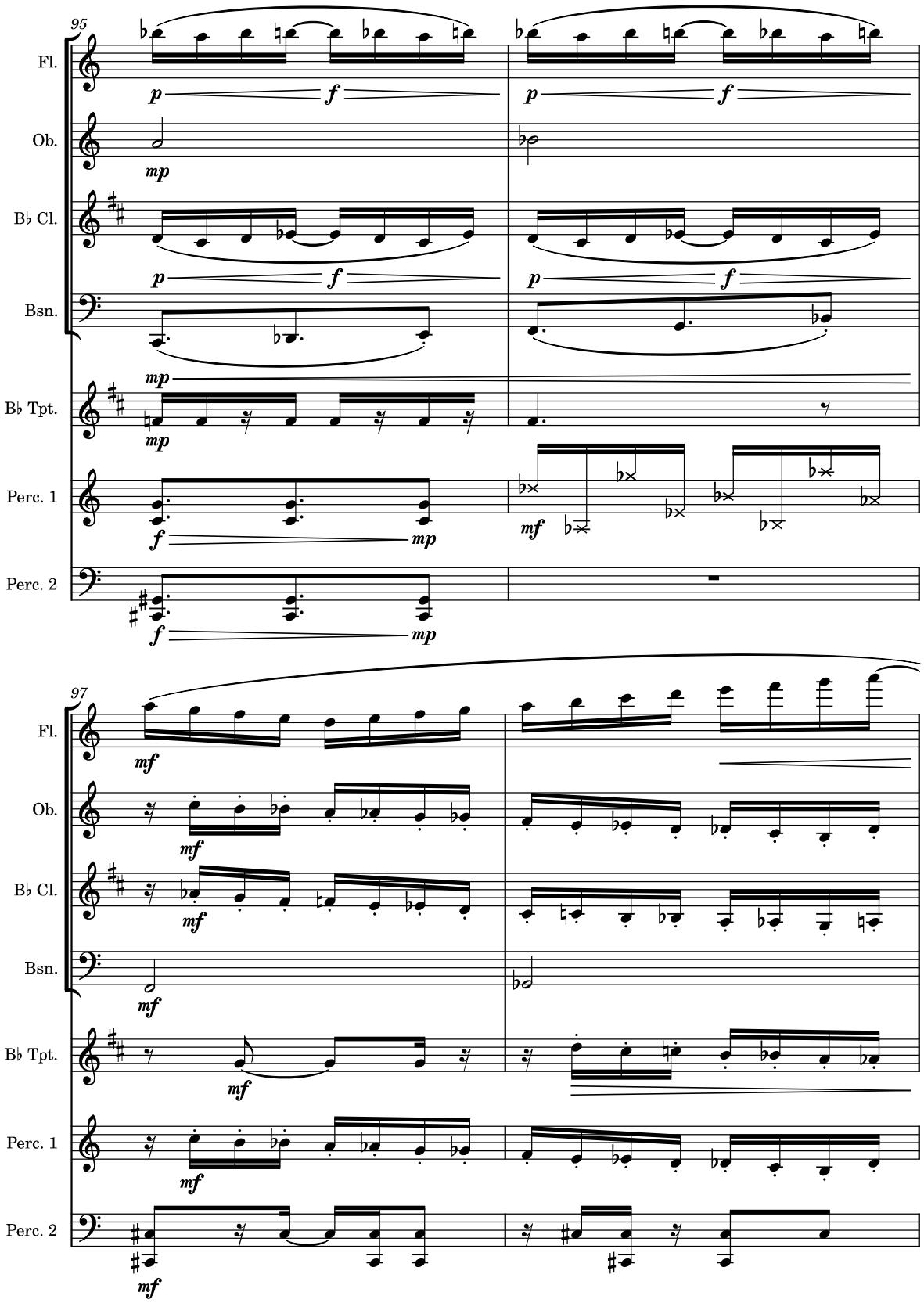

83
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
B♭ Tpt.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
ff
p
mp
mf
f
gliss.
Marimba
85
I
Marimba

Commuting in Manila

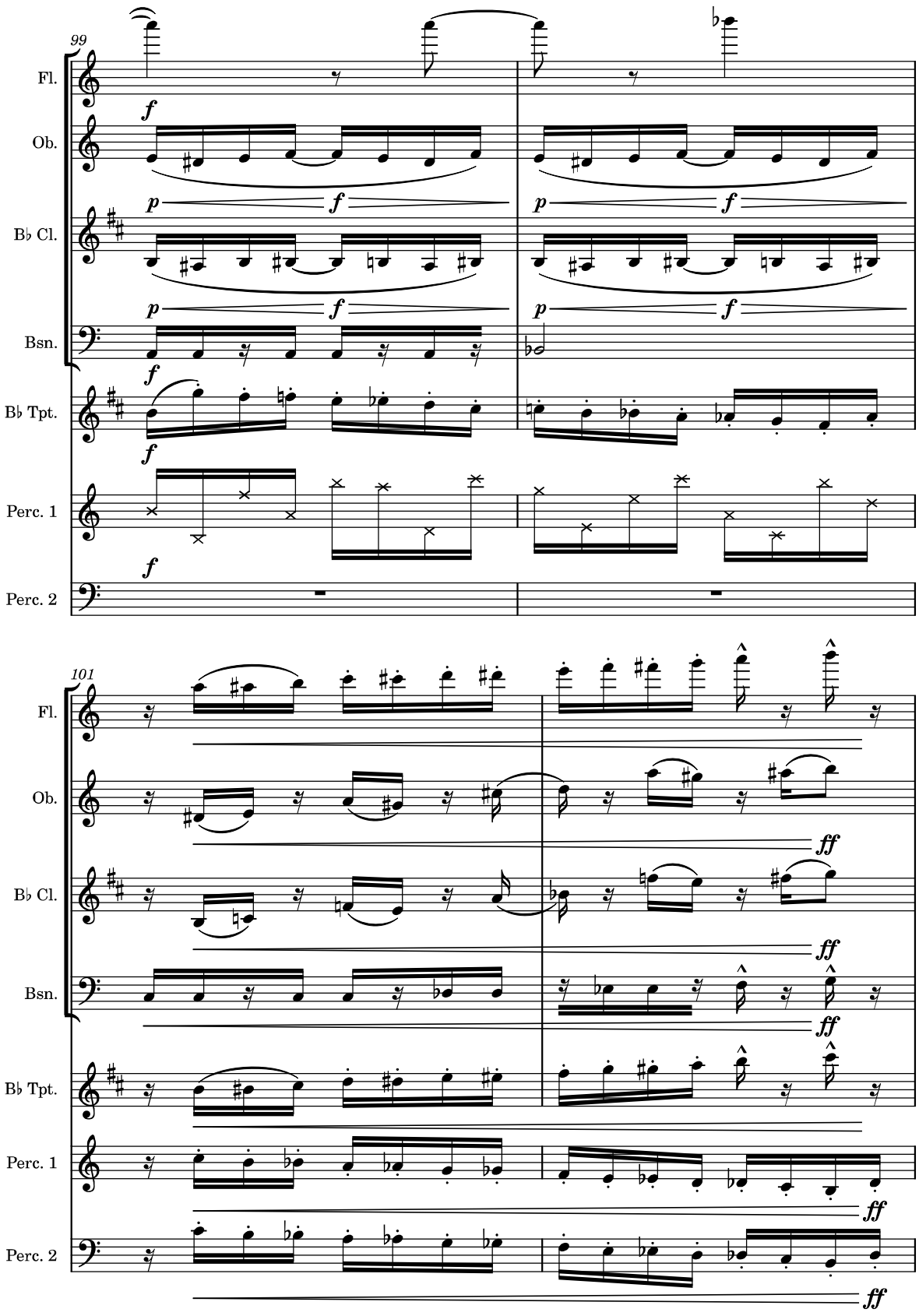


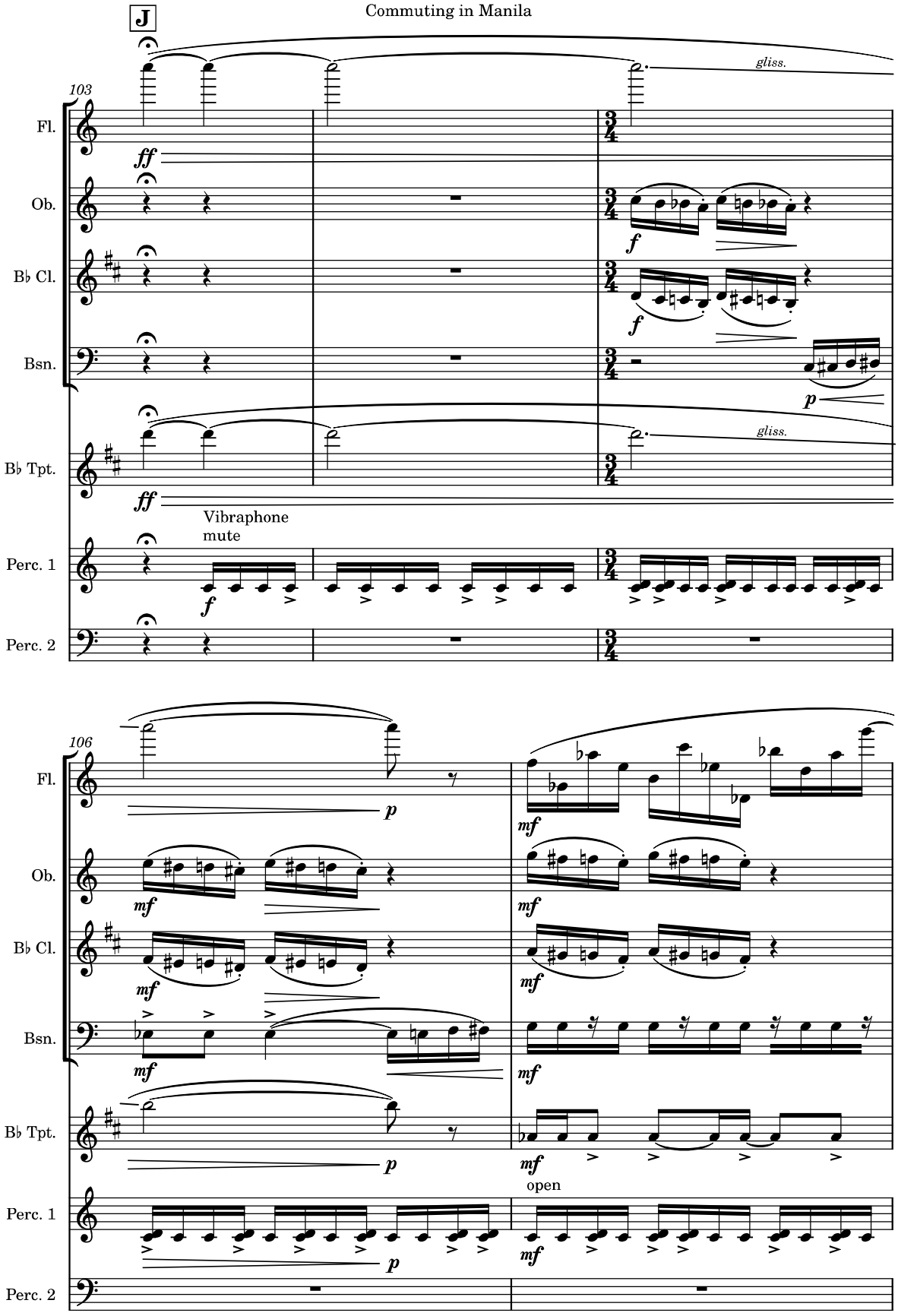

91
Fl.
mf
Ob.
mf
B♭ Cl.
mp
Bsn.
mp
B♭ Tpt.
mp
Vibraslap
Perc. 1
mf
Triangle
Perc. 2
mf


93
Fl.
p
Ob.
p
B♭ Cl.
p
mp
Bsn.
p
B♭ Tpt.
p
Marimba
Perc. 1
p
Marimba
Perc. 2
p

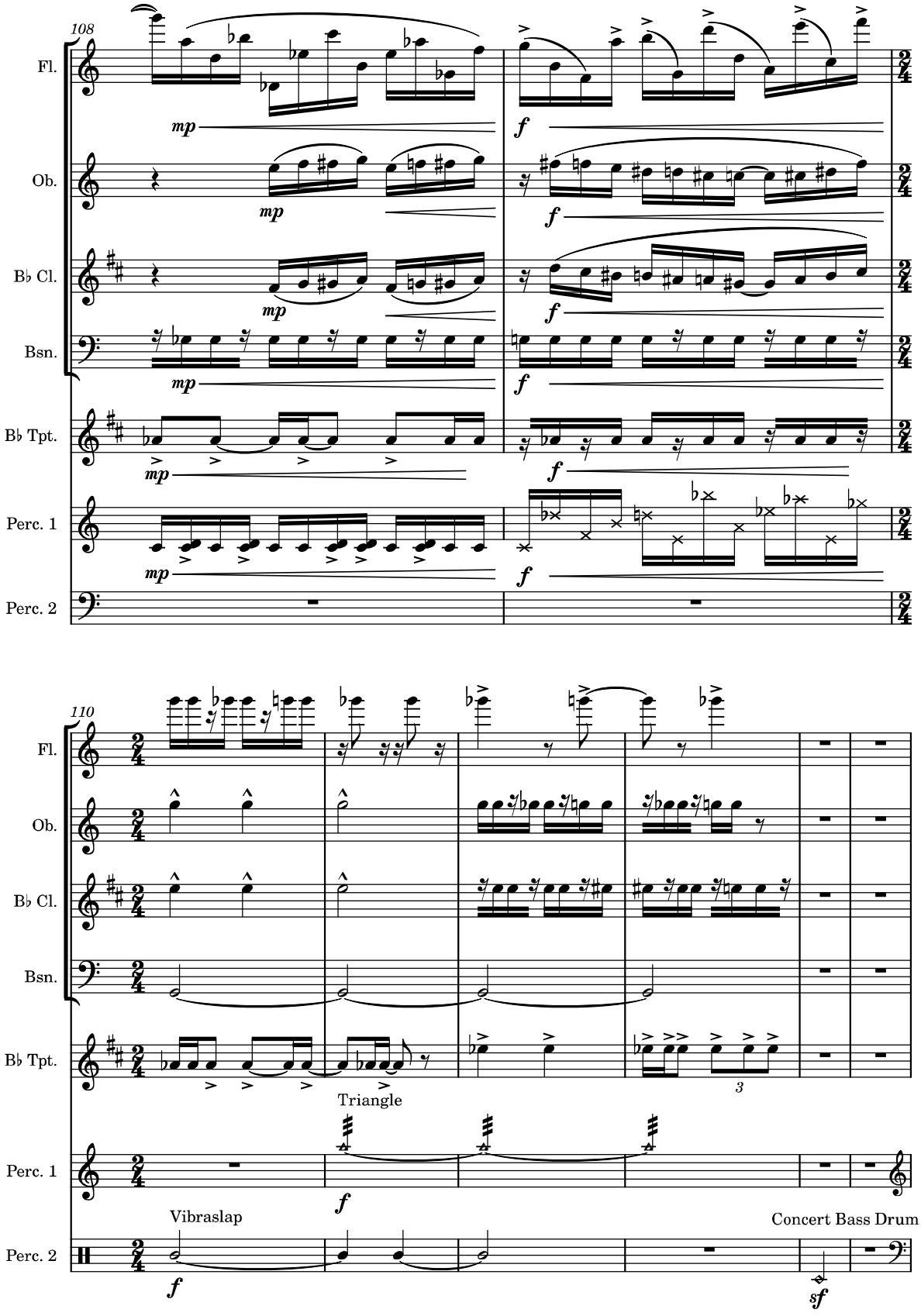

95
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
B♭ Tpt.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
97
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
B♭ Tpt.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2

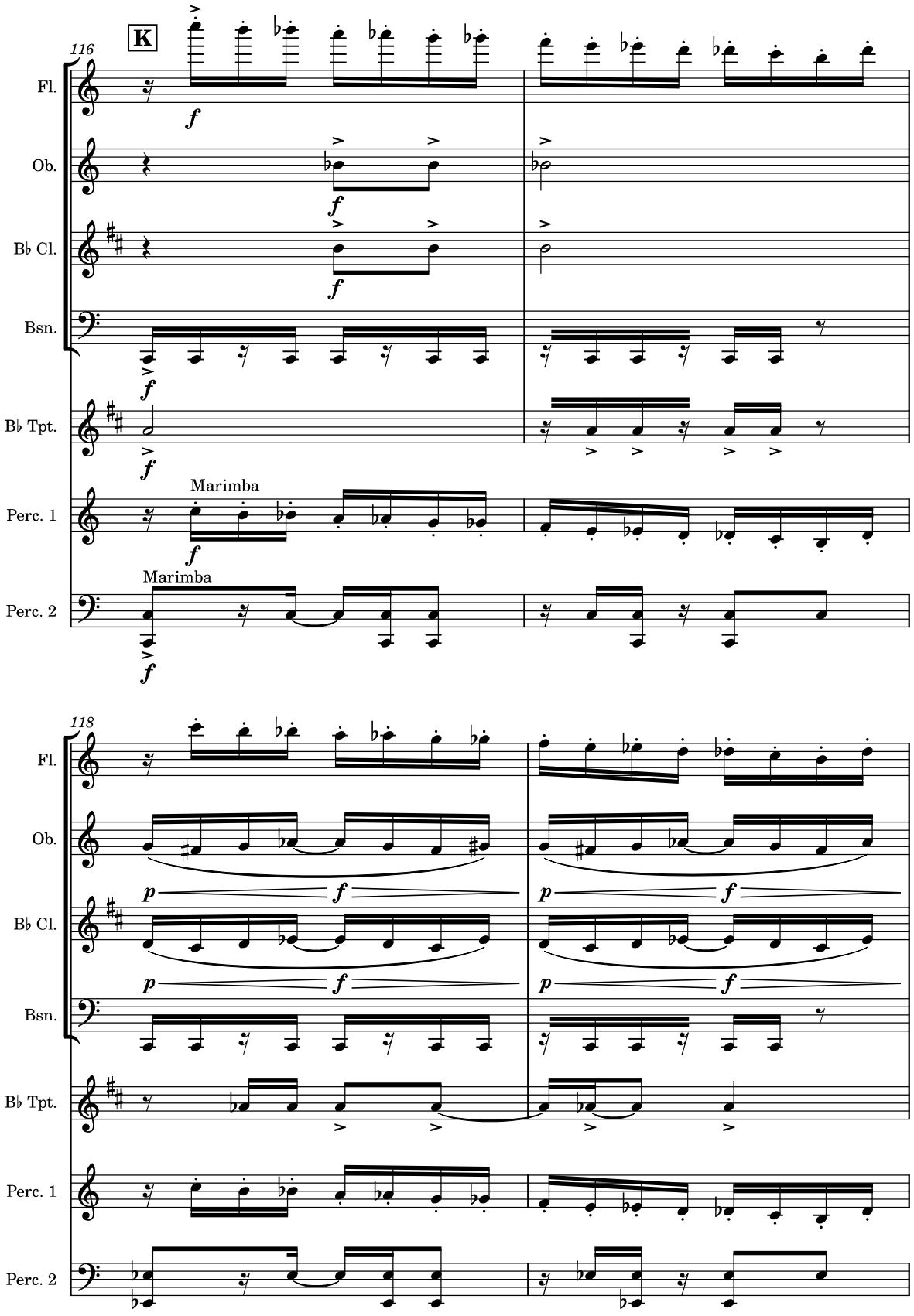
Commuting in Manila



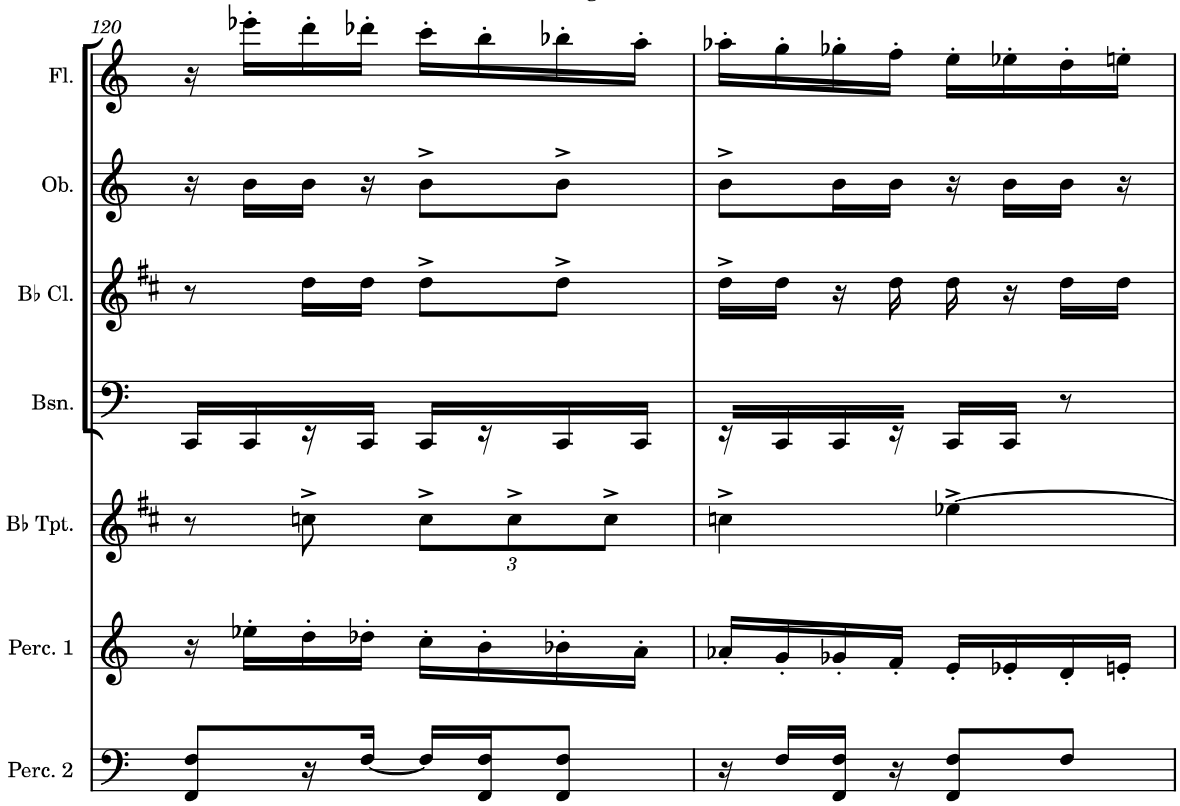

Commuting in Manila
J
103
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
B♭ Tpt.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
ff
f
p
gliss.
Vibraphone
mute
106
mf
open

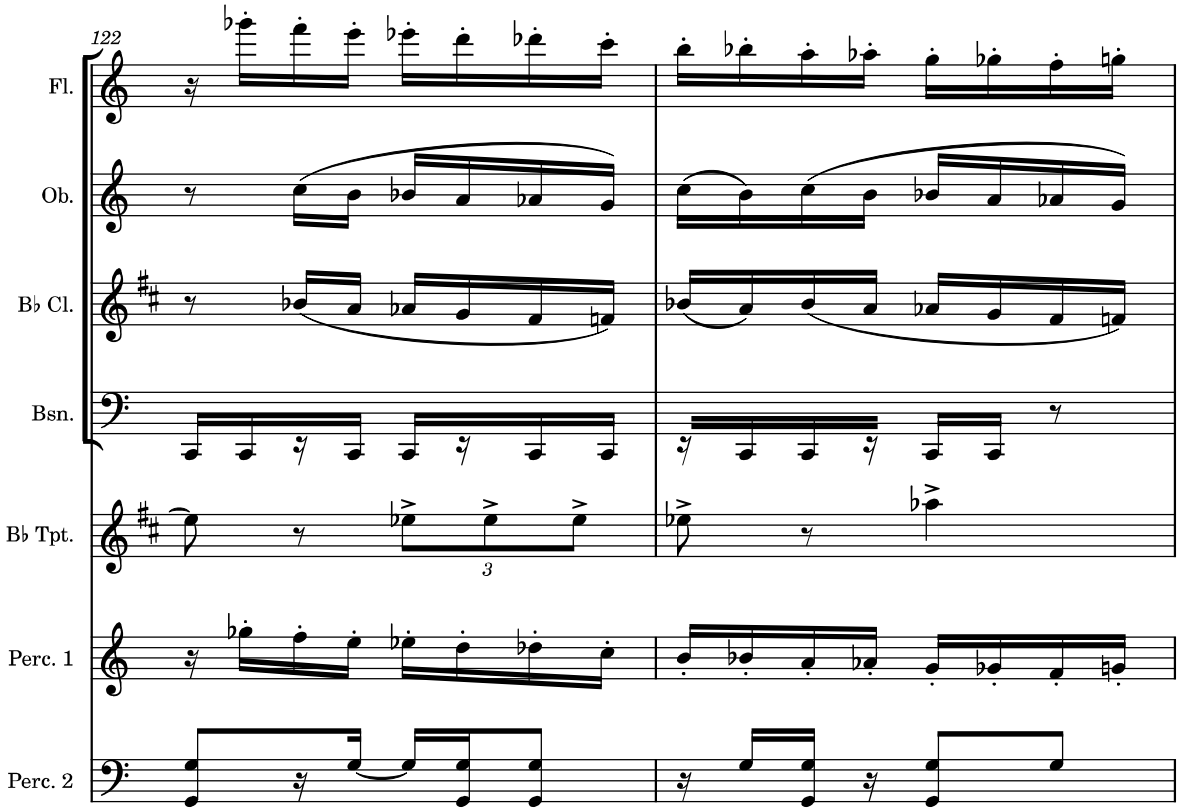
Commuting in Manila



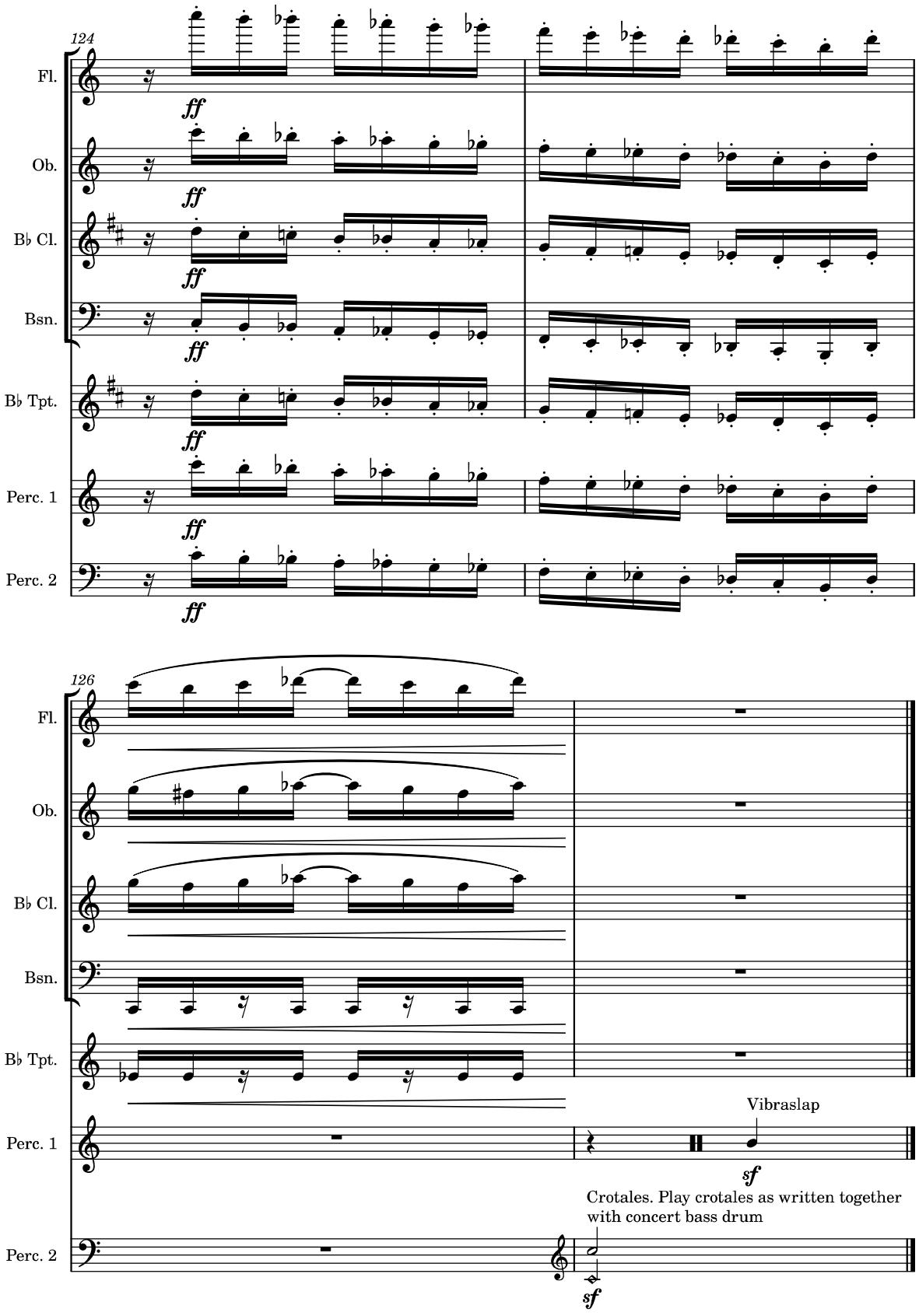

K
116
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
B♭ Tpt.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Marimba
Marimba
f
118
p
f

Commuting in Manila





Commuting in Manila



Paul Gabriel L. Cosme

Fantasy of the Consoled

For Solo Piano

Program Notes

During the pandemic, amid the isolation, I found solace in piano improvisation—forgetting that scales and any type of pattern exists. Out of this seemingly chaotic improvisation came out a series of recognizable patterns and sounds that strongly inform my personal musical style. Another solace during these tough times is Beethoven. His late works offered me consolation, especially his ethereal last piano sonata, op. 111, and the empowering string quartet, op. 132. My work, even if it does not sound like Beethoven, there is always that fundamental idea that came from him.

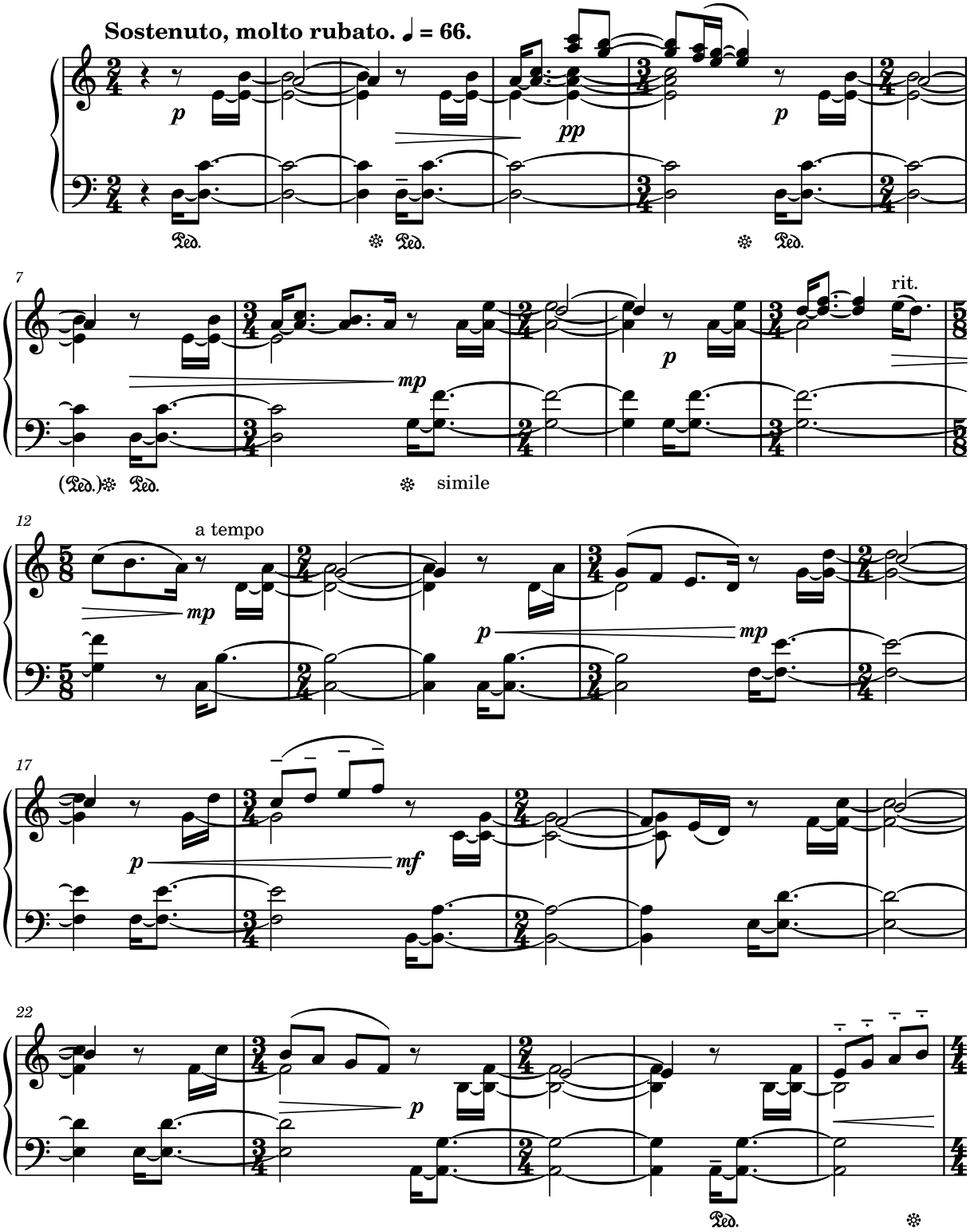
The *Fantasy of the Consoled* is an inventory of sounds and mannerisms I improvised on the piano, and in some way, it reflects the way I see the process of consoling and being consoled during difficult times.

— Paul Gabriel L. Cosme

Fantasy of the Consoled

For Ting-Chien Huang

Paul Gabriel L. Cosme



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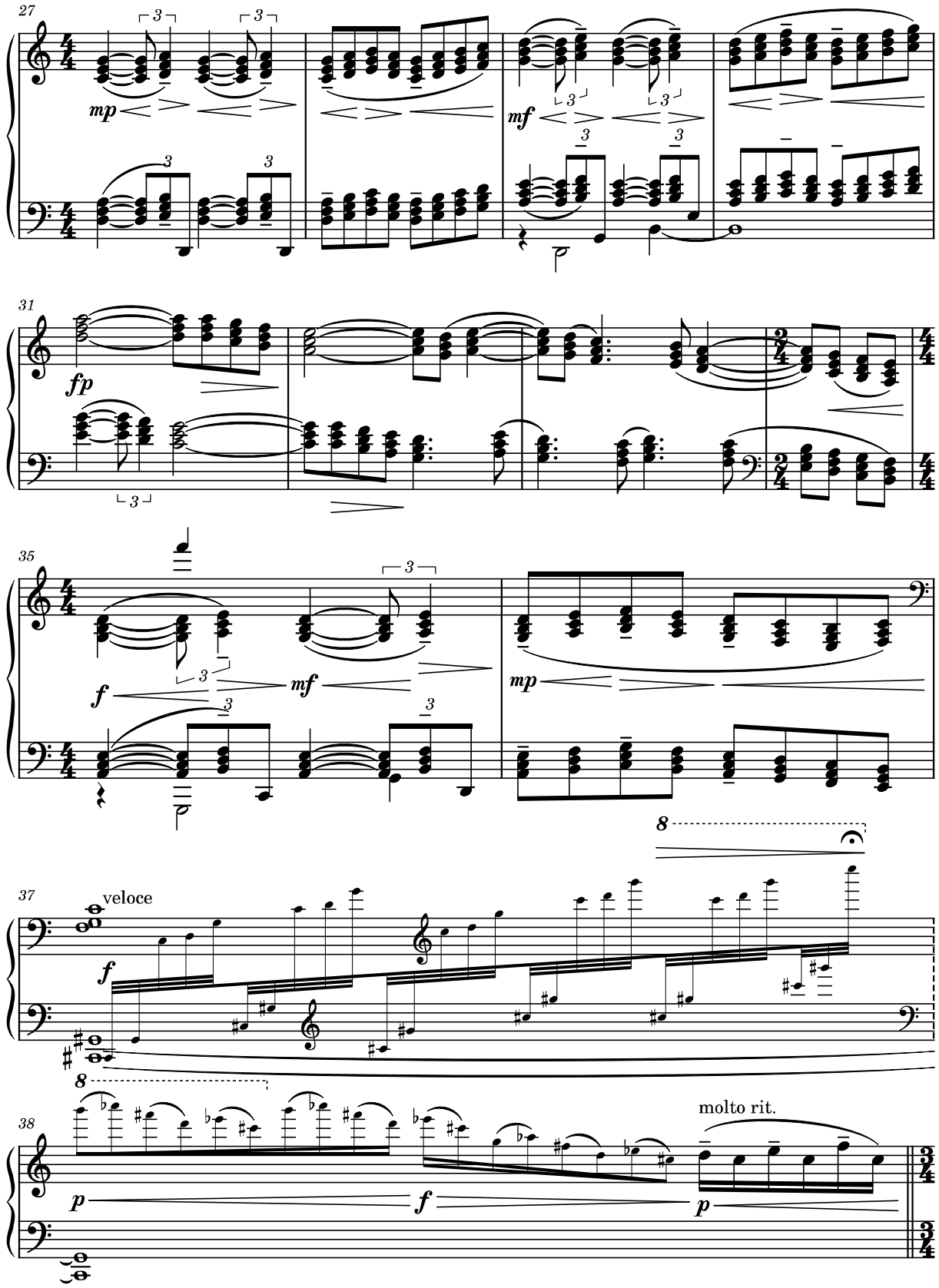
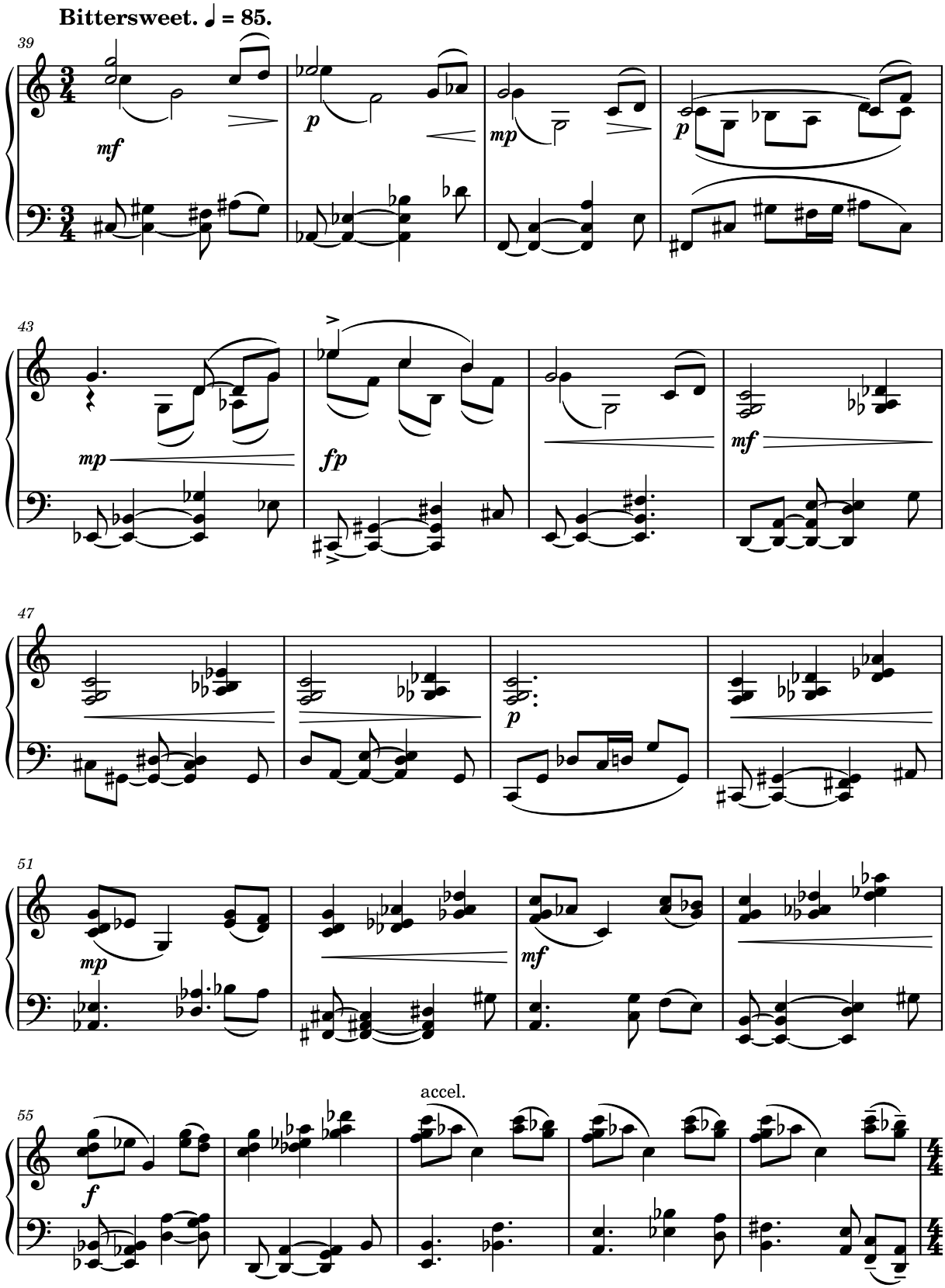
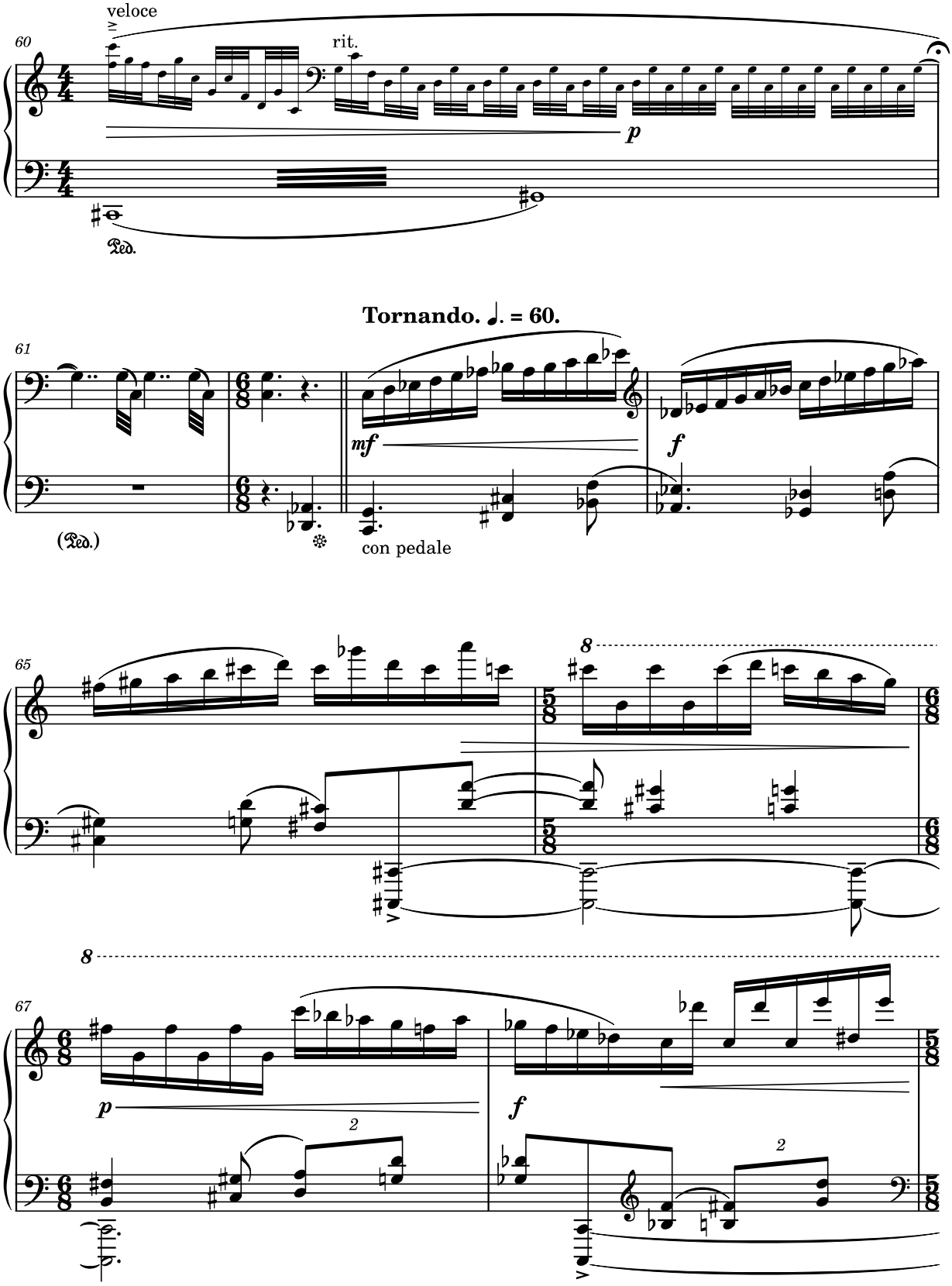
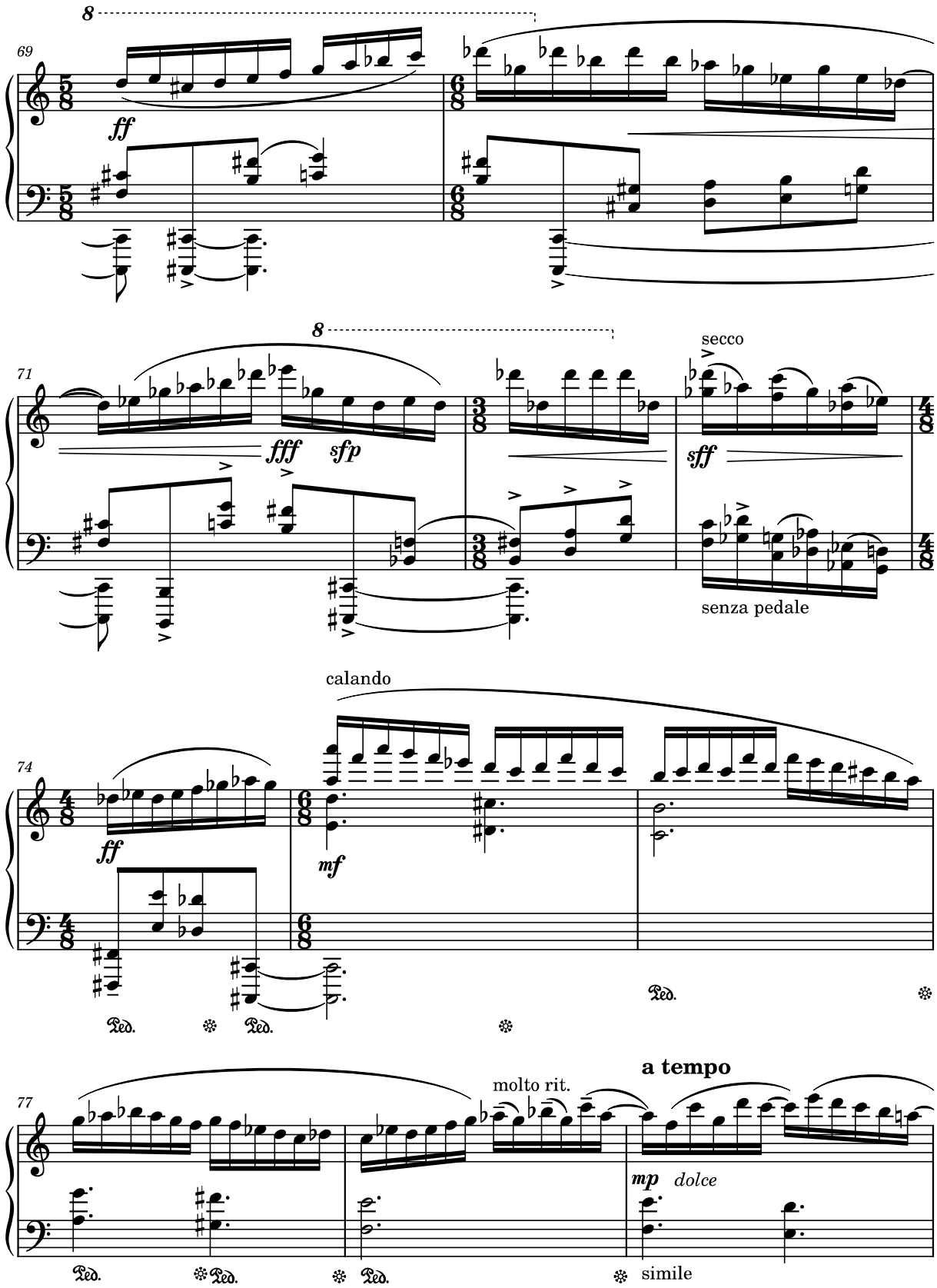
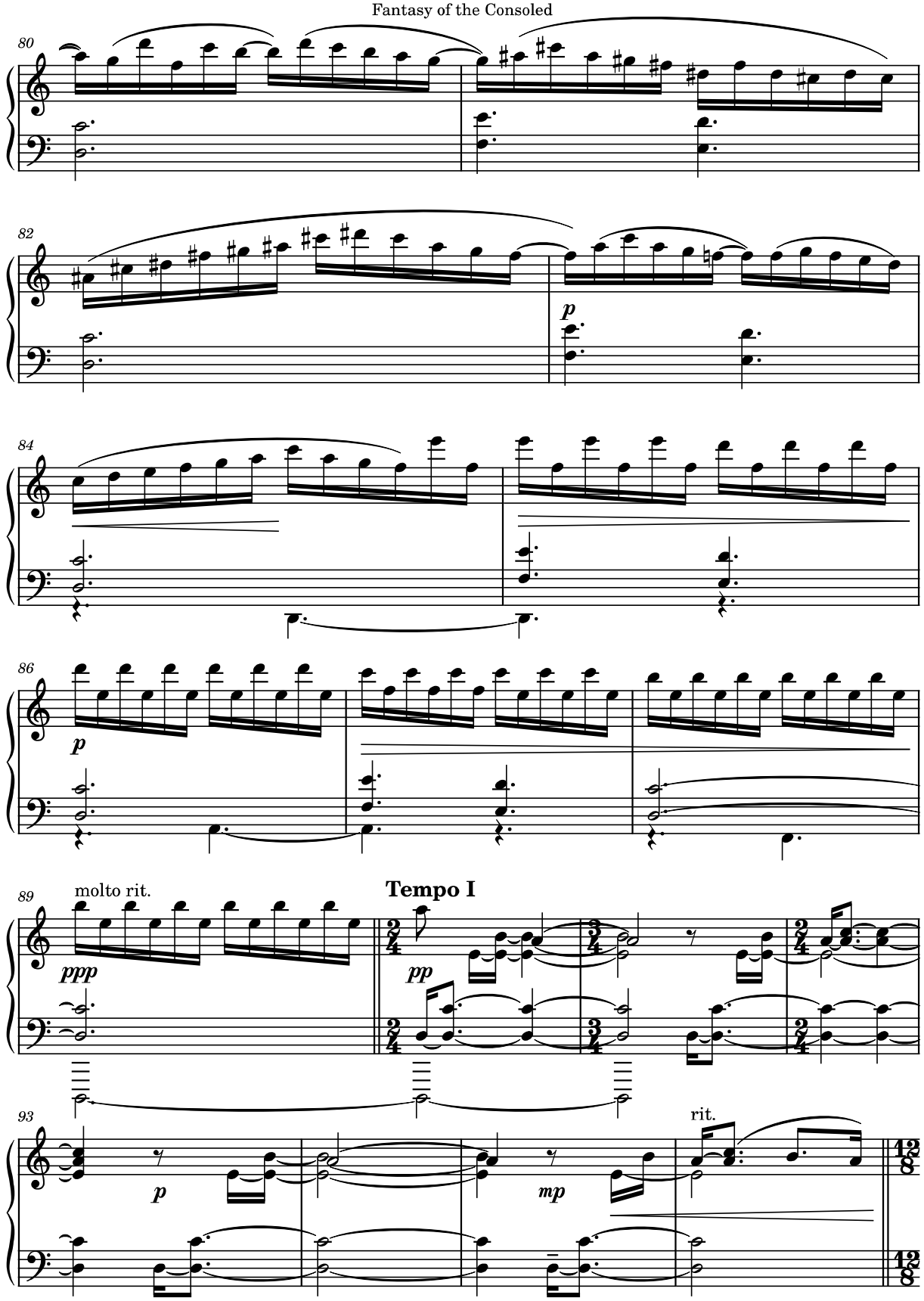
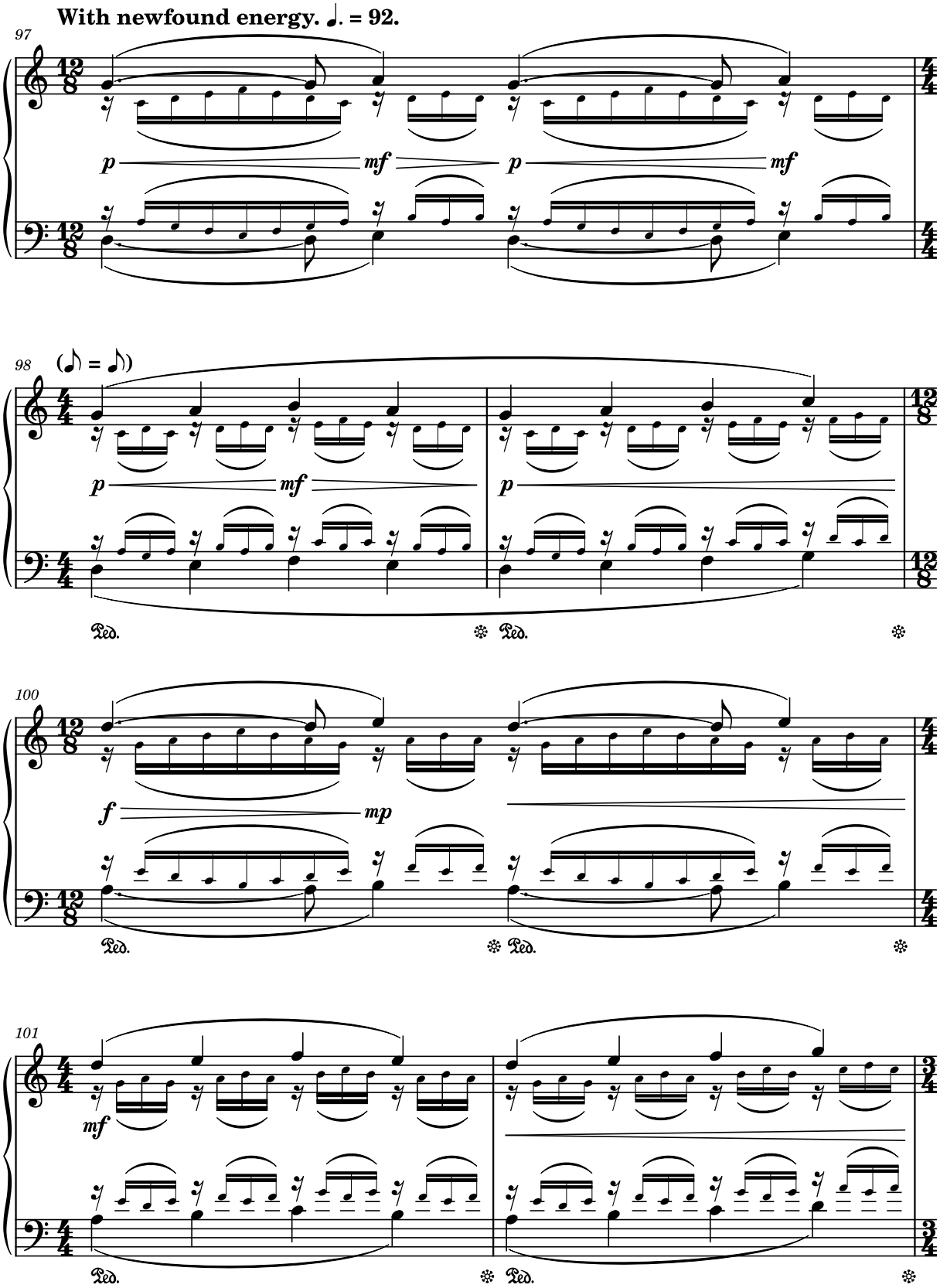

27
mp
mf
31
fp
35
f
mf
mp
37
veloce
f
8
38
molto rit.
p
f
p

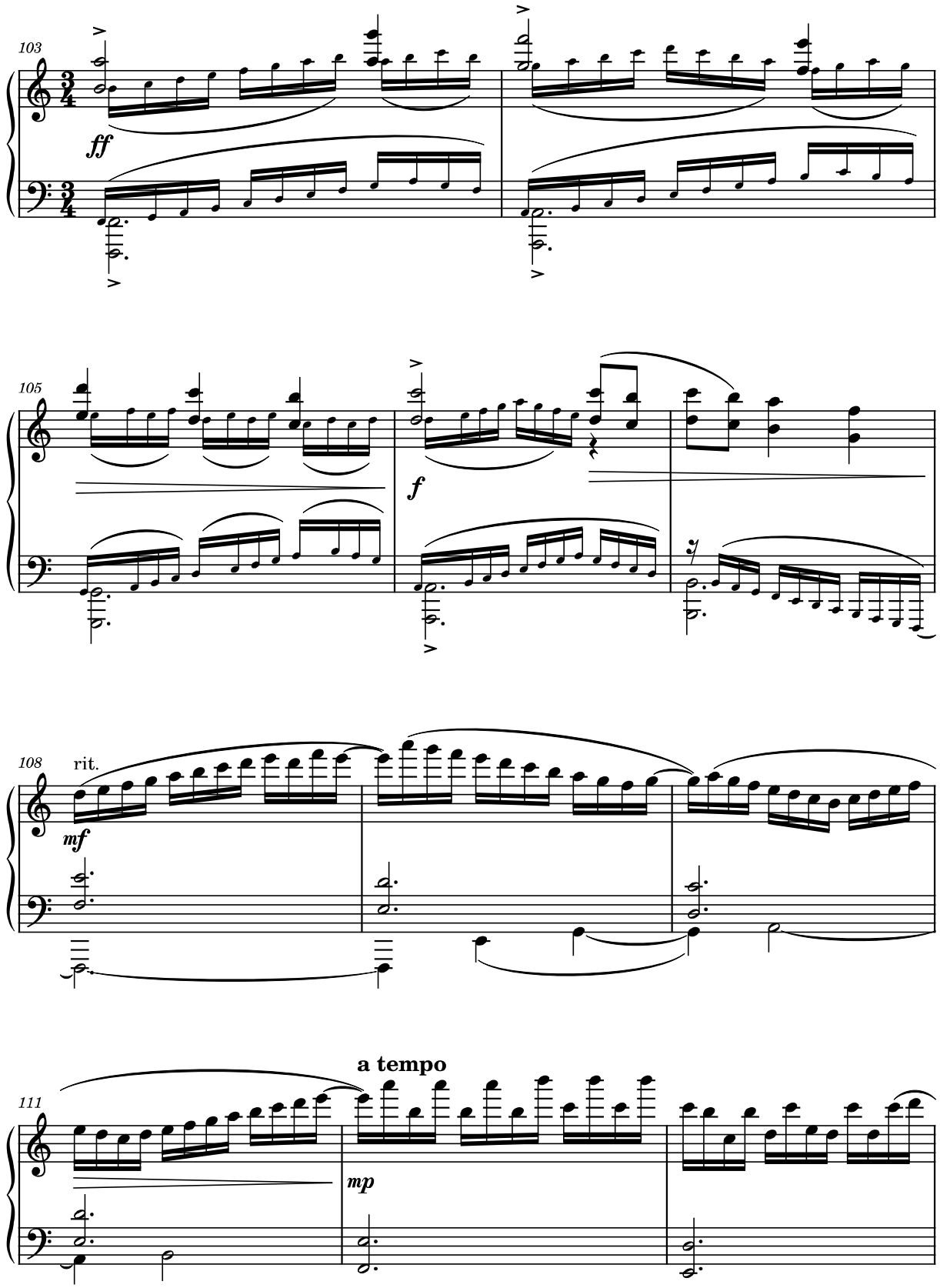

Bittersweet. ♩ = 85.
39
mf
p
mp
p
43
mp
fp
mf
47
p
51
mp
mf
55
f
accel.

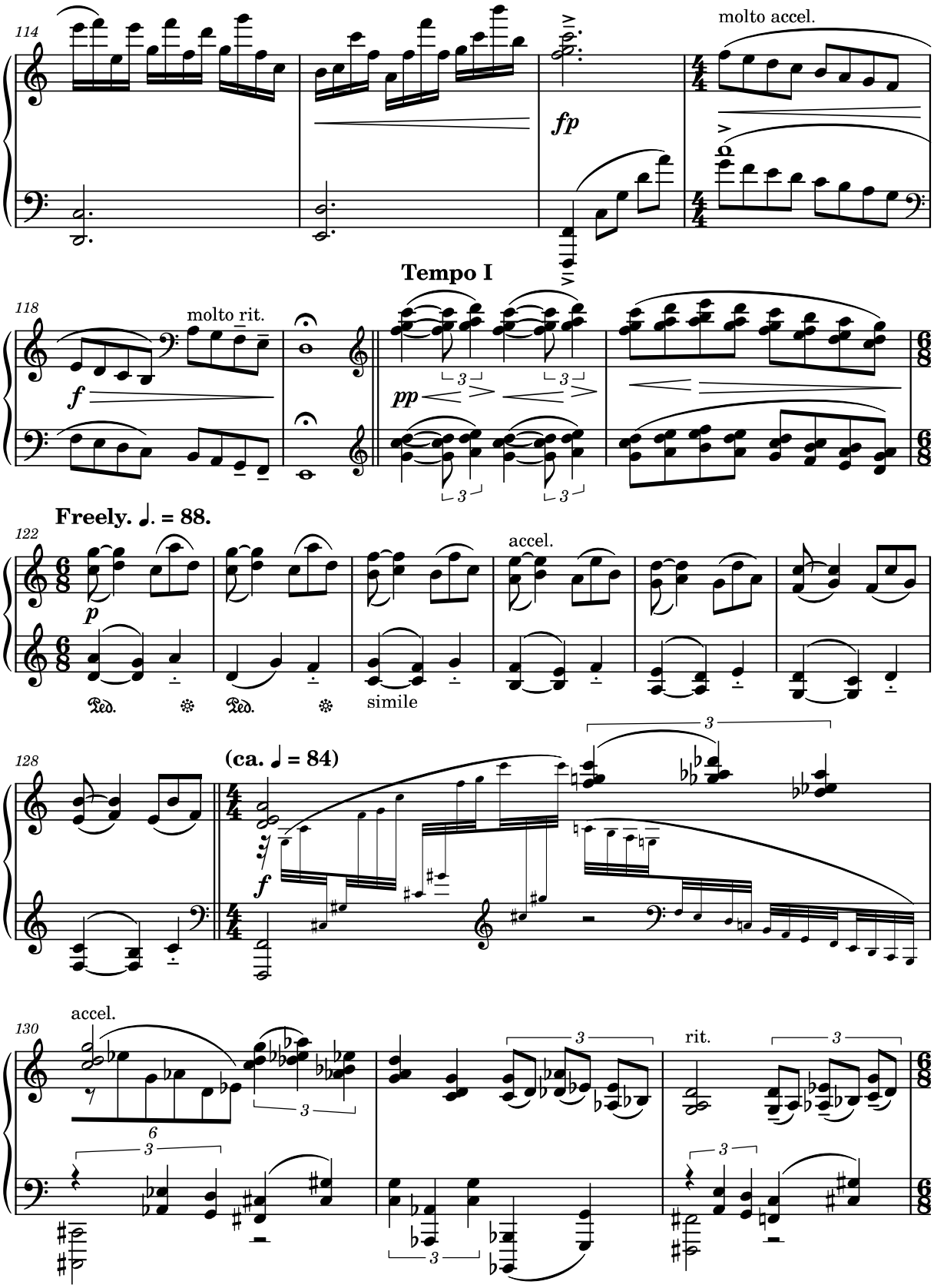

veloce
60
rit.
p
Ped.
Tornando. ♩. = 60.
61
mf
f
(Ped.)
con pedale
65
8
8
67
p
f
2
2

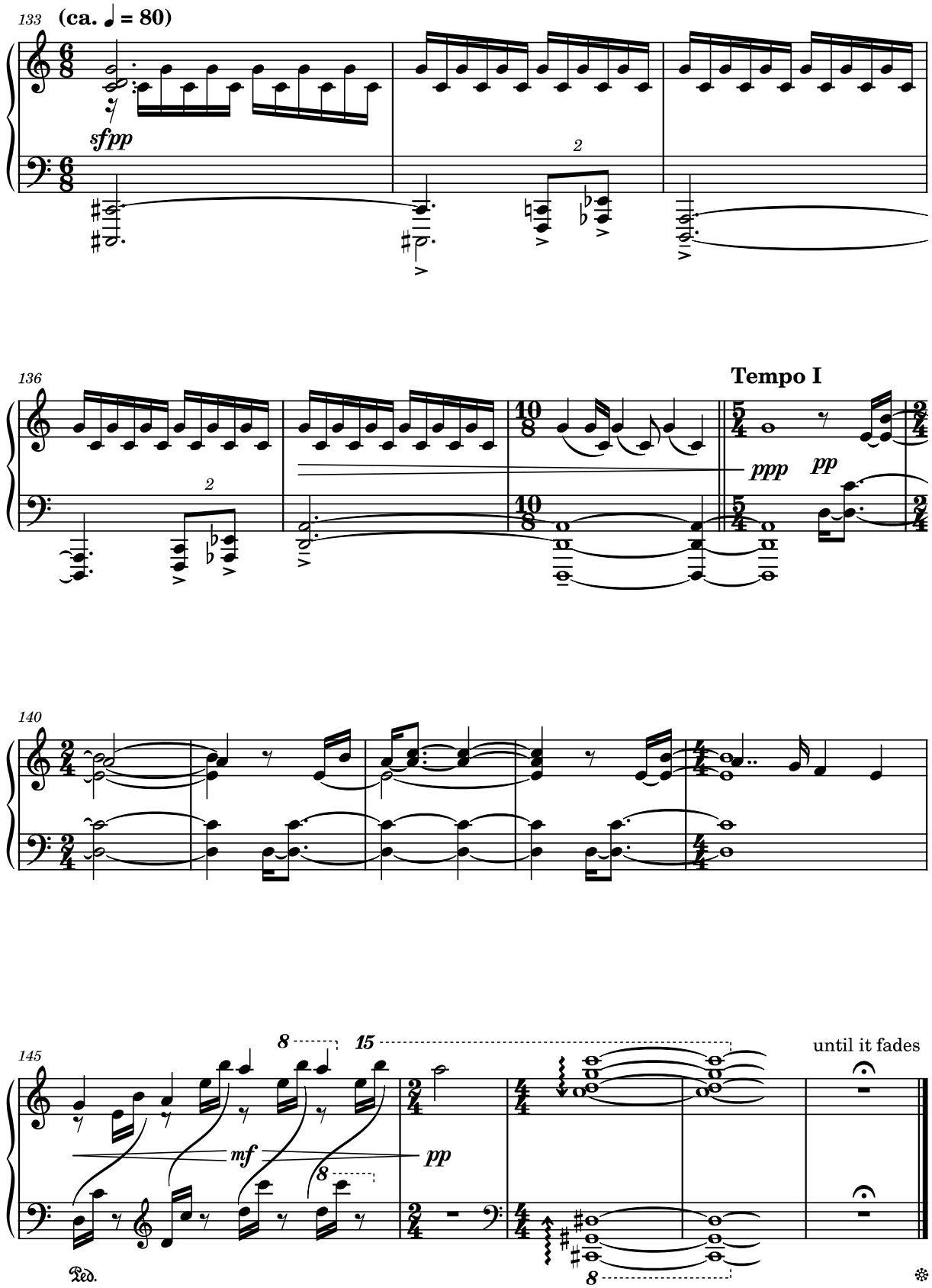

69
8
ff
71
8
fff
sfp
secco
sff
senza pedale
74
calando
ff
mf
Ped.
77
molto rit.
a tempo
mp
dolce
simile


80
82
p
84
86
p
89
molto rit.
Tempo I
ppp
pp
93
p
mp
rit.


With newfound energy. ♩. = 92.
97
p
mf
p
mf
98
(♪ = ♪)
p
mf
p
Ped.
Ped.
100
f
mp
Ped.
Ped.
101
mf
Ped.
Ped.


103
ff
105
f
108
rit.
mf
a tempo
111
mp


114
molto accel.
fp
Tempo I
118
molto rit.
f
pp
Freely. ♩. = 88.
122
p
accel.
Ped.
simile
(ca. ♩ = 84)
128
f
130
accel.
rit.


133
(ca. ♩ = 80)
sfpp
2
136
Tempo I
ppp
pp
140
145
8
15
mf
pp
8
until it fades
Ped.
8